

Turkish Language as a Politicized Element: The Case of Turkish Nation-Building

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This thesis is dedicated to Müfit Kulen.

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Die Diskussion über Sprache begann im Osmanischen Reich im kulturellen Sinn mit der Tanzimat-Periode. Diese Diskussion, auf intellektuelle Sphären und Kreise begrenzt, spielte eine immense Rolle für das Erwachen des türkischen Nationalismus. Nach der Entstehung der Türkischen Republik wurde Sprache zu einem politischen Instrument für die Abgrenzung der türkischen Identität für nationalistische Interessen der republikanischen Elite, wohingegen die Bedeutung der Religion in diesen neuen Strukturen heruntergespielt wurde. Die Aufgabe dieser Arbeit besteht in der Untersuchung der andauernden Restrukturierung der Konzeption von Nationalismus während des Staatswerdungsprozesses der Türkei unter Mustafa Kemals Regierung und der Effekte von Sprache auf die Verbreitung der nationalistischen Idee in der Bevölkerung. In der Arbeit wird die ethnobürgerliche Dichotomie für die Analyse von Nationalismus benutzt, dabei aber berücksichtigt, dass diese Typen sich niemals vollständig gegenseitig ausschließen. Auf Grundlage der Ergebnisse dieser Arbeit wird festgestellt, dass Sprache als Ergebnis der nationalistischen Idee der politischen Elite und als Subjekt sowohl von Corpus Planning als auch Status Planning in der republikanischen Ära die substantielste und effizienteste Komponente für die Bestimmung der sekulären türkischen Identität und der Verbreitung des Nationalismus in den 1920ern war und diese Rolle in den 1930ern mit schärferem ethnischen Unterton auch fortgeführt hat.

Stichworte: Sprachpolitik, Türkische Sprache, Türkischer Nationalismus, Sprachreform, Sun-Sprachtheorie

The discussions about language started with the Tanzimat Period in a cultural sense in Ottoman Empire and these discussions, confined to the intellectual sphere, played a huge role in the awakening of Turkish nationalism. Language, after the establishment of the Turkish Republic, came to be a political tool to demarcate the borders of Turkish identity upon the nationalist desires of the Republican elite, as the role of religion in the new structure was downplayed. The purpose of this study is to investigate the continuous restructuring of the conception of nationalism during the nation-building process of Turkey under Mustafa Kemal rule and the effects of language on the dissemination of the nationalist idea to the masses. In this study, the ethnic-civic dichotomy is utilized in analyzing nationalism, taking into account that these types are not mutually exclusive. On the basis of the results of this research, it can be concluded that language, being the outcome of the nationalist ideas of the political elite and a subject to both corpus and status planning in the Republican era, had been the most substantial and efficient component in defining the secular Turkish identity and disseminating nationalism in the 1920's and further continued its role through the 1930's with a sharper ethnic tone.

Keywords: Language Policy, Turkish Language, Turkish Nationalism, Language Reform, Sun-Language Theory

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1. Introduction

Along with being a tool to provide the communication between people, language also plays a key role in the political sphere. Especially during the transition period from the Ottoman modernization that started in the early 19th century and proceeded hand in hand with Westernization to the Turkish modernization that started after the Republic rose from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, language gradually turned into the main pillar of the Turkish political life. The Republican elite, which was itself a product of the modernization process of Ottoman Empire in the 19th century, renounced the political inheritance of its successor and aspired in 1920's to gather all the communities living in Turkey under the roof of Turkishness through homogenization. Regarding the facts that the millet system which separated people into groups according to their religions was held responsible of the collapse of the Empire by the republican elite and that almost half of the population of the newly established Republic was comprised of subjects emigrated from Caucasus, Balkans and various other regions, the homogenization had to be attained without differentiating people according to their religious or racial attributes. Therefore in the 1920's, it was only expected from the people to express in the Turkish language that they were feeling Turkish.

In the course of Turkish nation-state building, a sense of nationalism that converged to the civic nationalist aspect prevailed during the 1920's through an emphasis on common language and ideals. In the 1930's however, the ethnic aspect gained ground in consequence of the failure to develop a high culture. In accordance with this transformation, the area of utilization of language has altered and broadened. In 1928, the Latin alphabet was adopted; it was presented to the people as the new Turkish alphabet with the aim of secularizing and westernizing the language, and correspondingly, the society. In early 1930's, the tendency was to create a secular 'vernacular' language in which Arabic and Persian words that made religious connotations were removed. This action was followed during the second half of 1930's by the myths that glorified Turkishness as in the case of Sun-Language Theory which declared Turkish language as the proto-language, keeping language still in the forefront. Moreover, language had been the determining factor during the process of assimilation or dissimilation of minorities, demarcating the borders of Turkishness. The Turkish language, as the main pillar of Turkish nationalism and a modern artifact of the republican elite that was detached from its past, became a political tool to create the

secular and westernized Turkish identity rather than serving just as a communicative tool. As the renowned author and politician Tanpınar (qtd. in Demir) states: "The discussions about the Turkish language started with a civilization crisis. As a result of it, these discussions were held according to the political stances in our modernizing process rather than linguistically; the discussions about the Turkish language were in fact about the Turkish modernity and modernization."¹

Just as the Ottoman modernization arose out of the Western ideas, the ideas and the foundations behind the Turkish nationalism were also imported from the West. However Turkish nationalism, as in the case of all different nationalisms, had unique characteristics. Hence, it would not be appropriate to categorize it as a French-type civic or German-type ethnic nationalism with a hard-edged dichotomous approach. Although Turkish nationalism differed from the Eastern European nationalisms on account of the imperial past, the two resembled each other in terms of the important role language played in them. In the Turkish case, language was not the cause but the outcome of the nationalist ideas of the elite and was used as a political tool to construct the Turkish nation. Most of the works underestimate the role of language in shaping Turkish nation-building process and the analogy between the Turkish language policies and nationalism. Even when it is emphasized, either the role of corpus planning or status planning is mentioned. Contrary to those studies, this study starts the research from the Ottoman Era and concentrates on the period from 1919 to 1938, giving place to both types of language planning with a broad spectrum. The research question of the study is: "How did the Turkish political elite utilize the language as a politicized component in the course of building the Turkish nation?"

In order to be able to answer the research question, the dichotomy of ethnic and civic nationalism along with the influence of language and language planning on nation-building is discussed in the second chapter. In the third chapter, the political and linguistic structure of the Ottoman Empire which should be made clear in order to be able to comprehend the Turkish nation-state building process is emphasized. The main issues in this chapter are: the Ottoman modernization, the effect of the modernization process on the intellectuals and the rise of Turkism in the Empire as a consequence of

¹ Author's translation

the linguistic discussions among the intellectuals. In the following two chapters, the delicate balance between the role of religion, language, culture and common ideals as unifying elements from the year of 1919 to 1938 and the significance of Turkish language and education in the dissemination of Turkish nationalism are discussed. In the sixth chapter, four different cases corresponding to different time periods and their utilization in shaping the Turkish nation-building process are presented. These are: 'The Alphabet Reform', 'Turkish Language Reform and the Language Society', 'The Language Theories, Language Congresses and the Sun-Language Theory' and 'The Language Campaigns and Policies towards Minorities'. In the last chapter, the concluding remarks will be given.

2. Theoretical Framework

Eisenstadt (1966: 1) defines modernization as a "process of change towards the types of social, economic and political systems that have developed in Western Europe and North America from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth". As a homogenizing process, modernization enables different communities to form states that are linked to each other in a network of international relations and nations that develop under a common aim, dividing a line between "us and them". Nation-state, a structure that came up with the modernization process, had been regarded by many as a modern phenomenon that should be attained in order to reach prosperity. Industrialization, a broader trade network, modernization of the armed forces, the weakening of the role of religion and the standardization and dissemination of education and language have all been a part of the nationalization project in order to establish and sustain a modern nation-state. As part of the modernization, nationalism as a controversial notion has caused heated debates among scholars. Along with its definition, whether nations and nationalism existed in pre-modern times or they were the constructions of the modern era had been an object at issue. Smith (1996: 108) defines nationalism as an "identical movement for attaining and maintaining the autonomy, unity and identity of an existing or potential nation".

Theories of Nationalism

Three approaches to nationalism: primordialist, modernist and ethno-symbolist approaches interpret nationalism dissimilarly.

The primordialist approach regards nation and nationalism as notions that were existent in the ancient times. According to this approach, the commitment of the individual to the nation is precise and determined by primordial characteristics such as kinship, common religion, language or rituals.

Modernist approach on the other hand, puts forward that nationalism is a top-down modern construct. According to the modernists, the state created nationalism that gave way to the creation of a nation through social engineering, in search of a common aim and a common culture. A common language and standard education was utilized in this process. Anderson (1983), a modernist scholar, came up with the term "imagined communities"² and claimed that formation of nations was rendered possible by standardization of the language, print capitalism, the collapse of dynasties and advancement of capitalism.

As the third school of thought, ethno-symbolist approach elaborates on the act of reconstructing rather than inventing. According to Smith, both primordialism and modernism played a role in the shaping of nations as modern constructs with pre-modern roots. He claims that symbols and myths played a crucial role in the shaping and maintenance of the nations. He defines nation as "a named human population sharing a historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members" (Smith 1991: 40). Based on this definition, it could be suggested that his view of nationalism is comprised of both subjective and objective exercises of nationalism.

The three theories mentioned above are state-centric theories, neglecting the role of the society. Although it is true that these theories could be applied to the case of developing of Turkish nationalism during the period under the rule of Mustafa Kemal, the society as an independent actor should also be analyzed as they not only acted as rebels in some cases, but have also put the state on the spot by carrying the state politics to extremes.

Types of Nationalism

Nationalism as a political principle is divided into several types. Among them, the dichotomy between ethnic and civic nationalism stand out as the most prominent and

² Anderson's book published in 1983 carries the same name with the term.

examined typology. Civic nationalism symbolizes the struggle to render a group homogenous by virtue of creating a 'high culture' that all legally equal subjects living in certain political territories should adapt to. This requires dissemination of the new culture to all the subjects; education plays the biggest role in this process. Therefore, on the contrary to ethnic nationalism, a new culture that not only belongs to the elites but also to the masses is embraced instead of a vernacular culture. According to civil nationalists, all citizens living in a particular political territory are equal before the laws, no matter which ethnic features they possess. Citizenship "conveys the sense of solidarity and fraternity through active social and political participation" (Smith 1986: 136) and is not endowed ancestrally but is a rational choice.

Ethnic nationalism uses the features naturally and genealogically endowed to people as a base in place of the 'high culture'; a common history, myths, symbols and cultural components such as religion, language and traditions are the bases of this type of nationalism. Ethnic nationalism prevails when the cultural standardization under a high culture fails to succeed due to different reasons like the nonexistence of the necessary devices or institutions. In this type of nationalism, ethnic properties and uniqueness of the people are driven forward in the absence of a civic formation in order to stimulate the masses. This process requires the invention (or discovery according to the primordialists) of symbols and historic myths in a language that the masses can comprehend, thus brings along the use of vernacular language. Although kinship, ancestry or races have a place in certain paradigms of ethnic nationalism, this type is not to be confused with racism. However in some cases, the emphasis on ethnic and cultural values can surpass the power of law, the determining factor in civic nationalism, contributing to the rise of authoritarianism.

Membership of a person to the nation in ethnic nationalist communities is determined through common roots, language, traditions or different cultural elements whereas according to civic nationalism, common ideals, a definition of citizenship based on and protected by the power of law and national unity are essential. Thus citizenship in civic nationalism is defined subjectively. Hence Renan (19), as early as 1882, called nation (most likely in civic terms) a "daily plebiscite". In contrast to the standpoint of ethnic nationalism which supposes that nations were in existence before the establishment of the nation-states, "the starting point for civic nationalism is the state, and nationalism is the pursuit by this state of its own nation congruent with its territorial borders"

(Nikolas 1999). However, according to ethno-symbolist Smith, a common ethnic root is as important as unity in law or economy. Therefore, myths and symbols are utilized in order to form a conception of a common root.

The civic nationalism is usually identified with the perception of nationalism in France, while the ethnic nationalism is linked together with the romantic nationalism in Germany. Nationalism in the Western countries like France, Britain or United States was shaped after the establishment of a nation-state and its eventual borders, whereas nationalism in central and Eastern Europe was developed as a reaction to the then-existing state. Furthermore liberty, in the Western terms, meant emancipation from the repression of the government while in Central and Eastern Europe, it expressed non-existence of subjugation of others and building of a nation-state.

As mentioned, countries like Britain and France are usually given as models of civic nationalism. Those models have first attained modernity in political and civic terms, established a nation-state and then came the commitment of the masses to the state. In Germany on the other hand, nationalism played the main role in the establishment of the nation-state. Although this reified form of modelling facilitates the comprehension of the types of nationalism, it should be stated that these types are not mutually exclusive. Besides, the dichotomy created between two nationalisms is considered to be normative. As stated by Yack (1999: 105): "the civic/ethnic dichotomy parallels a series of other contrasts that should set off alarm bells: not only Western/Eastern, but rational/emotive, voluntary/inherited, good/bad, ours/theirs". Therefore, ethnic and cultural factors or the invention of a common history can be encountered in the civic nationalism cases whereas the ethnic nationalism would fail to construct a nation-state without the civic elements like state institutions, laws and citizenship.

Culture as a Politicized Element

According to Sugar (1994: 20), "nationalism was born in Western Europe as a part of a general trend and with political meaning. Moving eastward its emphasis became cultural-linguistic in Germany, reverting, once again, to politics when it moved out of Germany into the lands of Slavs, Greeks and Turks". Nationalism, moving towards the East, gained a cultural-linguistic meaning by virtue of the romantic nationalists like Fichte, Herder and William von Humboldt and the "linguistic reform, based on folk language and poetry, became as necessary as history for the national revivals in

Eastern Europe... Propaganda became work of historians and poets. They were revivers and glorifiers of the past if not inventors" (Sugar 1994: 42). As culture gained another meaning when it entered the boundaries of nationalism, language, religion and traditions became part of politics as well as containing ethnic elements. Both the primordialist and modernist scholars are in agreement that culture as a common ground is essential to connect the people. However, they have interpreted culture in different ways. For modernists, a high culture which would be disseminated through education and print capitalism is needed to form a nation; the primordialists, on the other hand, claim that culture is inherited from generation to generation and is defined genealogically.

Hroch (1996: 61-62) puts forward a model for the development of a nation-state under the influence of Eastern nationalism. According to this model, nationalism first occurs in the cultural and linguistic fields. The linguists and historians study the past and the old books; by this means, dictionaries are prepared and a historical past from the ancient times is put forward or created. They give weight to the vernacular and plain language, which the society would be able to understand, in order to disseminate their ideas. However at this level, Hroch argues that this movement cannot yet be defined as organized. After the political request of the nationalists are put forward and a nation-state is created, the momentous challenge of creating a loyal nation and a national identity is encountered. Using nationalism as a tool to establish the allegiance of the masses, state implements its policies through different channels like universal education, mass media (or military service in specific cases like Turkey).

Language According to Primordial and Modernist Aspects

Language played a significant role on the nation-building process in central and Eastern Europe. "Has a nation" asked Herder along the same line "anything more precious than the language of its fathers? In it dwell its entire world of tradition, history, religion, principles of existence; its whole heart and soul. To rob a nationality of its language or to degrade it, is to deprive it of its most precious possession" (Özkırımlı 2010: 13). According to William von Humboldt, language determines thought. In that vein, Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, also known as language relativity, argues that the language shapes the way the speaker perceives the world. This comprehension, in a way, lays the common language as a condition of building a uniform national identity to reach the goals. Hayes (5), as early as 1926, defined

nationality as “a group of people who speak either the same language or closely related dialects, who cherish common historical tradition, and who constitute or think they constitute a distinct cultural society”. With the increasing emphasis on the crucial role of language in the constitution of a nation, the number of national languages in Europe that was 16 in 1800 rose to 53 in 1937 (Deutsch 1942: 534). This rise does not necessarily mean that new languages came into being during this period; in fact, this case serves the purpose of the modernists.

Language Planning

The modernists claim that the language as people know today were formed in the modern era through the unification of the dialects. Hebrew, the language that played a crucial role in the shaping of the Israeli identity was revived, contributing to the issue. According to the modernists, the languages are not natural but artifacts and therefore language regimes play a part in shaping them. “The state has an interest in establishing a language regime and is widely believed to have the right to do so, if only by virtue of the fact that the state communicates with its citizens by means of languages of its choice. State interest in language is basically instrumental” (Coulmas qtd. in Balçık: 43). Nahir (1984) suggests 5 models for language planning: language revival, language purification, reform, standardization and language spread. Especially the process of standardization of the languages is linked to the development of the nation-states and the simultaneous project of modernity. These actions are the means of carrying out a corpus planning, which mainly involves linguistic operations in order to formalize a standardized language grounded on standard orthographic, grammatical and lexical rules. On the political side of language lies status planning. This way, state designates which language(s) are going to be used in political, and sometimes even public, sphere; the framework in this operation is usually determined by the political organizations rather than linguists.

Regardless of the perspectives of primordialists and modernists on language, it has been utilized by the states for political reasons. Pool (1991: 496) argues that “the choice of official languages involves an inevitable compromise between efficiency and fairness... Efficient neutrality, exemplified in church-state separation and racial nondiscrimination, is held inapplicable to language groups, because governments can simply ignore races and religions, but must use, and thus choose, languages”. Language policies of some states can be confined to the instrumental stance whereas

different states can ascribe a further meaning to the language. This means, every state pursues language policies in any case. Consequently, language reform is basically a socio-political, not a cultural or linguistic operation (Perry 1985: 295). Apart from setting the norms in the linguistic habitus through the official language policy, the state, in the interest of status planning, possesses effective tools like universal education, compulsory military duty, power of sanction on media (particularly for the authoritarian states), law enforcement body and the state institutions authorized to get involved in corpus planning. Besides, for the Turkish case, the transition of *rayah* into citizens capable of participating to the political sphere and their political mobilization necessitated the adoption of the official language by the masses, strengthening the hand of the state. The state draws advantage from these devices to disseminate the idea of nationalism, builds a national identity and creates the perception of “us” and the “others” (Sadoglu 2010: 22). As the most powerful actor in the field of language, the state shapes, sustains or modifies the relations of power between subjects. Like any other political field, there are also opposing views and clashes of interest within or without the state. For this reason, just as clashes between different groups or nationalities are possible, there is no wonder that intersecting interests of the elites belonging to the same group would lead to a conflict in the state.

3. Ottoman Empire

The Language

During the rule of Seljuq Empire, the predecessor of Ottoman Empire, the official language was Persian, the language of dynasty and military was Turkish and the language of education was Arabic. Afterwards, the Ottoman dynasty, although communicating among themselves and with the state elite with a language that is mixed with Arabic and Persian, made use of Turkish when necessary, acting pragmatist in order to easily address to the masses who speak a simple Turkish. It is known that Fatih Sultan Mehmed issued a legal code in simple Turkish in the 15th century. Also, speaking Turkish was regarded as a way of political and social mobilization for both Muslim and non-Muslim minorities (Lewis, 1980: 163). However, during and following the 16th century, the sense of belonging to the Muslim community started to overcome the consciousness of being Turkish. After this point, the uncontrolled flow of Arabic and Persian words accelerated. Also, the poets who imported and used the words from those two languages, regardless of if an equivalent for the foreign word in Turkish

existed, contributed to the process. According to Karpas (2004: 448), the gap between the colloquial language and the literary (dynastic) language widened due to the transformation of social, cultural and artistic spheres. The new language (Ottoman), brought along a communication problem between the center and the periphery (Mardin 1991: 145-146). The Ottoman state elite, nevertheless, did not attempt to standardize the language by taking the necessary steps like building an education system that would disseminate the Ottoman language; being in direct contact with the subjects was something that the Sultan did not desire. The chief goal of the rulers was to preserve the presence of the state and the present system by any means. Furthermore, this multilingual entity revealed the distinctive position of the state elite, language serving in this case as a means of symbolic power. A very good example for the communication gap between the classes is represented in the well-known traditional Turkish shadow play called "Hacivat and Karagöz". In the play, Hacivat personifies the educated class, while Karagöz is an illiterate character representing the public. The play revolves around the miscommunication between the characters, resulting from the language of Hacivat that is adorned with Arabic and Persian words and the simple Turkish spoken by Karagöz. Even though modernization started in Ottoman Empire in the 18th century, not until the second half of the 19th century did Ottoman state and literary elites attempt to restructure the society. Accordingly, the linguistic awareness until this period was immature.

The Edict of Gülhane and Modernization in Ottoman Empire

The Tanzimat Fermanı (Edict of Gülhane) proclaimed in 1839 had been a milestone for the Ottoman Empire. By virtue of this Ferman, the structure of the state changed entirely, western model playing the role of an objective. The Ferman guaranteed the security of life and property of the society and the rights of inheritance, made changes in the taxation system, implemented a four year obligatory military service for the men and assured the equality of all men before the laws. The Ferman could be declared as a formal announcement of the commencement of Westernization in the Ottoman Empire. After the Ferman, central state structure was implemented through the establishment of modern bureaucratic foundations like public service, ministries, postal service, police department and neighborhood units. Besides, first population census, modern educational institutions, media organs and modern art, literature and language researches all surfaced after the declaration of the Ferman. These indicators reveal that

the rulers took cognizance of the subjects for the first time and inclined to social engineering rather than merely regulating the society (Ahmad 1993: 26). After the Ferman, the idea of Ottomanism came out as the common ground for the people. According to this idea, all people, regardless of their national identities, served the purpose of enhancing the state under a common goal. The question in the minds of the elites and intellectuals of the period was: "how could we save the state?"

The correspondences of the modern bureaucracy with the provincial areas that came into the picture after the Ferman, increasing communication of the center with the periphery through the introduction of telegraph and the publications of the bureaucratic units and the media organs manifested the communication problem of the elites with the society. Balçık (2009: 62) claims that during the post-Tanzimat era, "the structural conditions of both the Ottoman state and the society were non-resistant to a successful and solid modernization of the political institutions whereas such a modernization is essential for the construction of modern language regimes". In the interest of standardizing the language, the Foreign Minister Ali Paşa ordered the stenographers to write in a pure and clear language and issued memorandums in favor of the teaching of a simple language in the schools (Heid 2001: 30). However the intellectuals, rather than the state elites, played the main role in building a linguistic conscious and using it as a means of reaching their political goals. Doing so, they acted as instructors and clearly took advantage of print capitalism.

Post-Tanzimat Intellectuals

Ali Suavi (1838-78), referred as one of the first Turkists by some scholars, elaborated on the Turkish effect on the spread of civilization in the world and the salvation of the Arabic language. Meanwhile, Mustafa Celaleddin Paşa (1826-76), a cartographer who came to Istanbul and became Muslim after he fled from Poland due to his insurgent activities in the Greater Poland Uprising of 1848, was criticizing the attitude of the Europeans towards the Turks and mentioning a Turco-Arian race. According to Celaleddin Paşa, although Turks were members of the European race, they were treated unfairly in the academic sphere; their only misfortune was to be living in a geography where the yellow races and the Arabs had been living, distinct from the civilized world. Even though not being embraced by the elites of the time, he also compared the words in Turkish to the ones in western languages with the intention of

proving the kinship of the two, a method that would be used in early Republican period, decades later (Aytürk 2004: 8-11).

However, the dominant trend at the time was Ottomanism and even though the leading cadres of Young Ottomans touched upon the sense of Turkishness, what really mattered was the sense of feeling Ottoman and the continuity of the state. Şinasi (1826-71) was a popular figure in the post-Tanzimat era. He was supporting the idea of language simplification in order to render the language of the publications intelligible to the society. Like Ali Suavi, who has claimed in the newspaper Muhbir that “The newspaper will deliver everything that is considered to be provided to the readers in the daily spoken language of Istanbul” (Balçık 2009: 78), he also used a simple language in his newspapers Tercüman-ı Ahval and Tasvir-i Efkâr. He then tried to write poems with simple Turkish for the first time, and attempted to prepare a Turkish dictionary, yet could not complete it. Ziya Paşa (1825-80), another prominent character of the movement, argued that Turkish poem should tend towards the periphery with the aim of embracing the folk literature. He also criticized the disparity between the languages of the rulers and the society, claiming that the post-Tanzimat movement could not express itself to the masses. In his opinion, the people could not comprehend the laws or *fermans*, hindering them from realizing and standing up for their rights. Semseddin Sami (1850-1904), an Ottomanist of Albanian origin, deemed Turkish language the cement of Ottoman Empire, believed in the necessity of simplifying the language and prepared the Turkish-Turkish dictionary in which he gave weight to simple Turkish and also included the words that he compiled from the vernacular language. Through the medium of the mentioned and unmentioned intellectuals of the post-Tanzimat period and their activities, the approach that made the distinction between Turkish and Ottoman languages came into prominence.

The awareness raised by the post-Tanzimat intellectuals about the importance of language and its practicability in the political field fascinated the political elite in the course of time. Until that point, each *millet* had their own judicial and educational system and were exempted from the military service in return for an additional tax under the *millet* system. This means that only Muslims were in the sphere of influence of the state and under the existing circumstances; the state had no chance of implying its language policies on other *millets* living in Ottoman Empire. Before the groundbreaking constitution of 1876, the state signaled the transition that was coming

in 1869, by imposing a compulsory elementary education in Turkish to every subject of the Empire.

The Rise of Turkism

The 1876 Constitution determined Turkish as the official language and laid down being able to speak and read the Turkish language as a condition of becoming a civil servant and a member of the parliament. Also, it had set Turkish as the language of speech in the parliament (Gözler 1999). Although the linguistic awareness had a great share in the emergence of it, the Constitution, naturally, was not confined to changes in the linguistic sphere. The 1876 Constitution recognized the notion of citizenship and symbolized the transition to the civic mentality of nationalism by pushing religion into the background and bringing loyalty to the state and the dynasty to the forefront instead. The identity designated in the Constitution was Ottoman nation.

However, the validity of 1876 Constitution did not last long. Abdulhamid II abrogated it in 1878 due to the Ottoman-Russian war and the constitution was suspended until the Second Constitutionalist Period in 1908. The reign of Abdulhamid II is identified with oppression; the political activities could not be pursued by people who did not belong to the political elite. Although official institutions like *Islah-ı Lisanî* were established under the rule of Abdulhamid, language did not play a big role in the general state policies. As the popularity of the Turkism ideology rose under the Islamist rule, the intellectuals attached a particular importance to the language issue. "In a political environment where Turkism was not favored by the State, linguistics turned out to be a channel for conducting Turkist politics" (Şerif qtd. in Balçık: 81) and made use of a simple language in order to disseminate their nationalistic ideas. Just when the war between Greece and Ottoman Empire broke out, the renowned nationalist poet Mehmet Emin published the book called "Turkish Poems", consisting of poems that were written with the Turkish syllabic verse and an extremely simple language. The most famous poem in the book starts with the lines: "I am a Turk, my faith and my stock [or breed-race], are greater" (Karpat 2001: 361). The purpose of the poem was to glorify Turkishness and show everyone that being a Turk is something to take pride in. Also, it draws attention that the book that was consisted of nine poems addressed in numerous chapters to the beauties of rural people and villages of Anatolia, evoking the romanticism of the central and Eastern European nationalisms.

The appeal of Turkism in Ottoman Empire grew apace through late 1890's and early 1900's. A turning point of the course of events had been Akçura's article called "Three Modes of Politics" published in 1904 which compared three remarkable ideologies present at the time (Ottomanism, Islamism and Turkism) in terms of having the greatest possibility of gaining the loyalty of the masses, in a state-centric manner. Akçura (1976) put forward that Turkism among the three ideologies was the foremost ideology. Being a Tatar who was born in Russia, he brought forward the allegiance of the Turks living outside the Empire as a measure against the possibility of the alienation of the non-Turkish population. He went on to claim that "the unification of the Turks, whose languages, races, traditions, and -for most of them- even their religions are one; who in most cases migrated from Asia to the East Europe; will be a service to efforts to form a great political nation which will be capable of defending the existence of Turks alongside the other great nations" (Akçura qtd. in Meyer: 136). By virtue of the courage the Turkists gained after the Japanese nation who belonged to the 'yellow race' won the war against Russia in 1904, the weakening of Ottomanism and Islamism due to the demand of independence of Muslim Albanian and Arab nations and the boom in the number of nationalist publications and organizations, Turkism entered its short-lived heyday in the Empire through 1910's.

The Linguistic and Political Movements in Late Ottoman Empire Period

The 1910's had been extremely eventful for the Ottoman Empire in political terms. Along with intellectual movements like The Young Pens and Young Turks, political movements like Turkish Society and Turkish Hearts steered the political life in Ottoman Empire and most probably, Turkey. The Young Pens was established in 1911 in Thessaloniki under the leadership of Ömer Seyfettin and Ziya Gökalp. The movement is also known as the New Language Movement. They were influenced by the populist movement in Russia and tried to apply the same approach to Turkey, creating a National Literature. However they have faced the obstacle of the language differences between the society and the literature (Aydingün, Aydingün 2010: 417-418). To overcome this obstacle, they suggested putting an end to the usage of Arabic and Persian grammatical rules in Turkish, keeping the foreign words that have become a part of Turkish in the language and standardizing the written language, taking the Istanbul Turkish dialect as the basis. In one of his articles, Seyfettin (1993) has driven

forward the less educated woman living in Istanbul as “the actual consciousness of the language” since they were not under the influence of the foreign languages and ingeniously harmonized the borrowed words to the Turkish language. In the same article he referred to a journalist from Izmir, who was under the effect of the literary language and removed the words which his uneducated mother did not understand from his articles before he published them in order to reach the masses. All in all, The Young Pens were neither radical purists nor conservatives with regards to the language issue. Afterwards, including the Republican period, this approach towards the language would be called the Gökaltip approach, by virtue of his influential studies.

In an environment that language and politics were severely intermingled, it cannot be expected that such a movement did not have a political stance and ideal. The political ideal of the movement was to prevent the downfall of the Empire; they thought that disseminating a standard language was essential to do so. However, the terms ‘Ottomanism’ and ‘Turkism’ were used on behalf of each other by the Young Pens, giving an idea of the tendency of the Ottomanists of the time to the idea of Turkism (Aydingün, Aydingün 2010: 420). In his book ‘The Principles of Turkism, Gökaltip (1968: 16) claims that “There are fellow citizens in our country whose ancestors have come from Albania or Arabia sometime in the past. If they have been educated as Turks, and have become used to working for the Turkish ideal, we must not set them apart from other citizens. How can we consider those who shared not only our blessings but also our misfortunes as foreigners?” Drawing the lines of the definition of ‘Turkish’ in his own way, Gökaltip defines a nation in a rather civic manner as a community that is comprised of people those have commonalities in terms of language, religion, morals and arts, that is to say, went through the same form of education. Therefore, the unity of education and ideals instead of a common bloodline should be looked for (Ibid). He called the commonality of the prospects he sorted: ‘National Discipline’.

Under the oppressive Abdulhamid II rule, the Turkists gradually broadened their sphere of influence. Most of them gathered under the umbrella of The Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) that imposed the issuance of the constitution, second time in 1908 after 1876, and had an impact on almost every aspect of life during their short-lived rule. The Unionist movement, in contradistinction to the Young Ottomans who had a huge respect for the dynasty, placed emphasis on the state discourse and

mostly came from the center, had rural backgrounds and were raised with a school discourse, under the effect of positivism (Ahmad 1993: 34). The Turkish Society and Turkish Hearts were established under the CUP rule. The aim of the Turkish Society Journal was declared as awakening the Turkish identity of Ottoman Turks that had long been forgotten, by virtue of the purification and dissemination of the Turkish language. As for the Turkish Hearts, the follow-up organization of Turkish Society, the second article of their regulation issued in 1912 set “working for the refinement of the Turkish race and language through elevating national discipline, social, economic and scientific level of the Turks, which are one of the most important Islamic societies” (Sarınay 1994: 152) as an aim.

As CUP came to power in 1908, the status of Turkish as the official language and the only language that could be used in official correspondence was primarily emphasized in the political program (Açık: 597). CUP gave importance to the homogenization and standardization of the population since the millet system in Ottoman Empire was regarded as a resolving element. Actions like imposition of the mandatory Turkish education, relocation of the masses or Turkification of the district and village names were taken against the non-Turkish Muslim population in the Empire whereas state supervision over the schools of minorities had been the attempts of controlling the non-Muslim population. However, this attempt backlashed and expedited the process of independence of Albania (Sıvgın 2012: 6-7).

The 1913 coup d'état staged by the members of CUP, in which the War Minister was also killed, strengthened their position in the power. In the meantime, the notable members of CUP, who were also the leading figures of Turkish Hearts like Gökalt, contributed to the increasing role of Turkism. Between 1914-1918, CUP not only focused on the First World War, but also carried out different internal policies, mainly secularization and nationalization, including the reformation of the Julian Calendar, inclusion of women in the public services, acceptance of woman students to Darülfünun (Ottoman University) and the affiliation of the Spiritual Courts to the Ministry of Law. Also the term ‘national’ was brought to the forefront during the World War; national library, national music, national film industry are the terms that were first used in this period (Yıldız 2001: 81). The Turkish alphabet also had its share of the reform process. The Ottoman alphabet, being a subject of reforms since 1860’s, was reformed once again during the World War by Enver Paşa, and nevertheless did not succeed. Also, it

is revealed that there are Turkish dispatches in Latin alphabet with French spelling in the archives of the army, the pioneer institution during the last decades of the Empire.

The educational, cultural and political policies of homogenization of CUP could not succeed because of the unfounded state structure, the disorder during the war and the limited time they had for the implementation of the policies. However they laid the foundation and paved the way for the upcoming rule in the early Republican period. Regarding Anatolia, that had a 40% population of non-Turks or non-Muslims³ (Atay 1969: 449), as the remainder of all the lands they had and as a safe haven, CUP realized that it was impossible for the highly populated Greeks and Armenians to integrate into the Turkish society. This mentality brought about a period ranging from the deportation of Armenians to the population exchange with Greece. Hence, the Republic inherited (ultimately after 1924) a state that was comprised mainly of Muslims and a petty amount of non-Muslims. Even so, the new regime had a lot to do, considering that a feeling of national unity and identity cannot be mentioned regarding the population. A memory of Fahir İz, referred to in the book of Lewis (1999: 22) displays the viewpoint of a subject, revealing the Turkishness was not only seen unsuitable to the non-Muslim population, but also to the higher classes even in 1930's: "during his military service in the neighborhood of Erzurum just before the Second World War, he had got into conversation with a shepherd, whom he shocked by using the words 'Biz Türkler' (We Turks). 'Estagfurullah!' was the reply, 'Ben Türküm, zat-ı âliniz Osmanlısınız' (Lord have mercy! I'm a Turk; Your Excellency is an Ottoman)".

4. Turkish Republic

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk had been the leader of the national struggle that started in 1919 and after the establishment of the Republic, he became the president and ruled Turkey until his death in 1938. Under his rule, creating a national identity and unity had always been the priority. However, the policies of the Turkish Republic under Atatürk rule were not carried out on a linear trend. Yıldız (2001), asserts in his work that the Turkish national identity between the years 1919-1923 were under the religious influence. The militant secularism was in act from 1924 to 1929 and the

³ In the book, Atay specifies that this is according to the census of the churches in the country.

criterion for being part of the nation were being a citizen of the Turkish Republic, speaking Turkish, being raised with a Turkish culture and sharing the ideals of the society. Eventually from 1930 to Atatürk's death, the common ancestry and kinship discourse was occasionally utilized, reaching the borders of ethnicism due to the lack of charm of a Republican ideal, especially because the religious factor was pulled out. Between the years 1923-1938, Turkish republican nationalism (hereafter will be referred to as 'republican nationalism'), that emerged as a non-irredentist and anti-expansionist movement, had the overtones of both civic and ethnic nationalism, having based on common culture and a sense of belonging. However, they did not abstain from drawing advantage from the ethnicist elements when they felt the need to. The legislative body and the education system, grounded on the purpose of creating the sense of belonging, played a big role in republican nationalism.

1919-23: The Religious Influence

The Amasya Circular issued in 1919 mentioned the national sovereignty for the first time, becoming a symbol for the Turkish national struggle of the Ankara government further on. However, this circular had never spoken about a Turkish identity. According to the circular, the nation was comprised of the Muslim community except for Arabs (Yıldız 2001, 128). In the same manner, Mustafa Kemal stated in Samsun that he was determined to gather Kurds and every other Muslim communities under the same roof with the Turks and used the term the 'nation of Turkey'⁴ instead of the 'Turkish nation' at the beginning of the national struggle (Oran 1999: 5). Also, Mustafa Kemal was very prudent in terms of trying to replace the religious element with the national element; not presenting himself as against to Sultan and the religious order that prevailed in Anatolia, he deliberately annexed the terms 'nation', 'national' and 'nationalism', terms that were reproduced from *millet* and had a religious connotation among the Turks, to his speeches about how the Sultan and the religious system of the Empire were targeted by the foreign powers (Ahmad 1993: 48).

In one of his speeches in May 1920, Mustafa Kemal mentioned that "the unity that we (the Ankara Government) have decided to save is not the unity of Turkish or Circassians, but an Islamic unity comprised of all components"⁵ (ATAM⁶: 39). Also it

⁴ According to Oran, Mustafa Kemal has not used this term ever again after October 29, 1923.

⁵ Author's translation.

was stated both in 1921 and 1924 constitutions that the religion of the Turkish state is Islam and the article remained in force until its repeal in 1928. Later on Mustafa Kemal, in his book *Nutuk* published in 1927, confessed that in his opinion, stating the official language and the official religion of the state were totally different things, but when he was asked by a journalist if the new government was going to have a religion, a question that he deeply wanted to avoid, he had to indicate that it is Islam, but felt the need to add that there is freedom of thought in Islam. He then called the articles about the official religion as concessions that the Republic did not regard as unfavorable (Erşekerçi 2014: 240).

The Definition of the Turk and Minority

After the Independence War was over and the Republic was established, the new government got a head start on carrying their project of nationalization into effect, unlike the cadres of Ottoman Empire, since they have won the war and were able to create the political base to do so. On top of it, the non-Muslim population in the modern Turkish territory was only 5% when they came to power, whereas it was 20% before the First World War (Keyder 2001: 112). Although the priorities of the new positivist political elite was kept in the background, by the end of the war, advancing nationalism through social transformation had become the priority. As an illustration, whereas the 1921 Constitution did not indicate an official language or mentioned the term 'Turk', the constitution of 1924 even replaced the concept 'citizen' with 'Turk'. This brought the overlapping of the terms, causing the differentiation of 'Turk as a citizen' or 'ethnically Turk', on the contrary to the Ottoman way of thinking that called every subject living in the territories 'Ottomans'. This separation gave way to a mindset that de facto highlighted the religious or racial features of the subject when determining Turkishness. Thereby, 'Greek Turkish citizens' were mentioned when referring to the long-established people of Anatolia with a Greek origin, whereas the masses that emigrated through population exchange were called Turks. There were also instances when pragmatist early republican elite took the religiously oriented Ottoman system as a reference, disallowing the migration of Turkish speaking Gagauz Turks to Anatolia while Muslim Bosnians or Pomaks were permitted to do so.

⁶ ATAM (Atatürk Research Center) is an institution under Prime Ministry. In 2006, this institution has published an extensive study comprised of Mustafa Kemal's speeches.

Furthermore, the definition of minorities in Turkey were made based on religion in the Lausanne Treatment. The Armenians who were known to speak the best Turkish among the non-Turkish population (insomuch that Armenian women used to go on the stage instead of Turkish women until 1919, since Turkish women being stage actors was not approved by the community and the Armenians spoke an almost perfect Istanbul Turkish) and lived in Anatolia for hundreds of years were ranked as minorities while the Bosnian or Kurdish communities were legally designated as Turks.

As early as 1923, Hamdullah Suphi who was a member of Youngs Pens during the last years of the Empire, carried out his duty as the president of Turkish Hearts for many years and became the Minister of Education of Turkish Republic in 1925, defined Turkish as the one “who speaks Turkish, practices Islam and carries the love of Turkishness in his heart” (Acar 2004: 165). However, just one year after his claim, he stated in the preparation phase of 1924 Constitution: “[A Jewish friend of mine] asked me ‘What should I be doing to be a Turk? I told him that it was possible for him to be a Turk. The Jews who had been expelled from Spain and came to this country with their Spanish will be Turks after they accept the language of the country, and consider Turkish schools their own” (Bayar 2014: 129) eliminating the religious factor from the list and placing the emphasis on the language, in parallel to the political developments. In the same line with Suphi’s eventual statement, Gökalp, one of the master minds of Turkish nationalism during the early republican period, emphasized in 1923 that: “A nation is not a racial or ethnic or geographic or political or volitional entity, but is composed of individuals who share a common language, religion, morality, and aesthetics; that is to say who received the same education... In truth, a man desires more to live with those who share his language than with those who share his blood” (Ersoy et al. 2003). During the strictly secular republican period, language, culture and ideals were brought forward, while religion played an instrumental role.

1924-29 Militarist Secularism

A wave of secularization left its mark on the policies of Turkey after the year 1924. In 1925, Seyh Said Rebellion broke out against the nationalization and secularization policies of the state. The Rebellion took place in the Kurdish area and embodied both religious and national components. The only opposition party in the parliament, Progressive Republican Party, was banned on the grounds that they were using religion as a means of propaganda. Afterwards, an assassination plan against Mustafa Kemal

revealed by the Governorship of Izmir led to the trials of many -including Pashas and MPs- in Independence Courts. As a reaction to the religious movements, Mustafa Kemal stated in 1925 that there is no place in the civilized Turkish community for the primitives who stands against the science and who seeks for material or spiritual happiness through the guidance of this and that Sheik (TSK; 247). In the coming years, Islam as the official religion was repealed from the constitution and the secularization reforms continued -until it reached up to the Turkification of the call to prayer in 1932. However, the excessive secularism of the republican ideology failed to stimulate the masses and brought the greater incorporation of the ethnical dimension to the ethno-civic structure. As will be mentioned in the language policies section, language, playing the greatest role in disseminating the idea of nationalism, kept pace with the political developments; during 1930's, it was utilized as a subject in the Sun-Language Theory.

During 1920's, the national identity of the ideal Turk had been shaped and promoted by the state. The principle was the unity in language, culture and ideals. As mentioned earlier, the common ideal lost strength with the exclusion of religion, the major actor in the political sphere for centuries. As for culture, the republican system strived to form a united Turkish (high) culture by interfering with the social sphere. As an illustration, wearing a hat was made obligatory for men with the hat reform whereas a Western appearance for women was encouraged. In that vein, Ankara was to symbolize the modern and Western face of the Republic. The new capital city came to be known as the city without minarets, as no mosques were built during the RPP rule that lasted 27 years (Ahmad 1993: 92). In other respects, the construction of the national identity continued with symbols such as the flags, Turkish national anthem and the nationalistic monuments erected throughout the country. In 1932, Keriman Halis, first ever Turk to win the Miss Universe title and had Caucasian roots, constituted a perfect example for the ideal Turk. Atatürk expressed after the contest that he was not surprised with the decision of the jury since the Turkish race is the most beautiful race in the world (ATAM: 479).

1930-38 Republican Nationalism under the Influence of Ethnicism

Scientific racism was still in demand throughout the world during 1930's. Even though Darwinism started its decline through 1930's, the issue was still dealt by the Western scholars. Likewise, after the First World War, French Prime Minister Clemenceau (Yıldız

2001: 120) claimed that Turks are Mongoloids which are not able to govern themselves. Kemalism which allegedly came out as a reaction to the imperialist movements, was inherently against any thought that despised the Turks. During the last phase of republican nationalism under the rule of Mustafa Kemal (1930-1938), the political elites committed themselves to glorify Turkishness and prove the assertions of the Western scholars about the Turks wrong. Thus, it would have been possible to motivate the masses to transform into the ideal Turk they had in mind. Having a national economy, national culture or national language had all been the pillars of the Turkish nationalism the republican elite wanted to disseminate. The sentence "Our holy scripture is our nationalism", written by the MP Barkur in his book "There are no Religions but Nations" and Atatürk's note that reads "Well done" nicely summarizes the trend of republican nationalism during 1930's (Tüfekçi 1985: 170).

In the absence of the religious element, the lack of a common national mission and romanticism legitimized the inclination towards ethnic nationalism in the Republic during the 1930's. In 1930, Mustafa Kemal complained about the unconsciousness of the Turkish people in the sense of nationalism and the pervasion of the apprehension of the West that Turks are a backward nation, even among the Turkish people themselves. According to him, "the Turks in the Ottoman era initiated the imperial and national history from a Bedouin tribe with 400 tents. However, the priority should be to teach the people how much of a noble nation, a nation that is the mother of all civilizations, they are a member of" (Erkal 1981: 117).

Even though it would not be appropriate to claim that the republican regime was racist, there were instances when ethnicist policies were pursued. These policies of ethnicism curiously went hand in hand with the Turkification/assimilation policies. The religious or other minorities in Turkey were coerced to either become a Turk or a subject to the ethnicist policies. As speaking Turkish and assuming the culture had become a more valuable indicator than the religion for being deemed Turkish, the non-Muslims that complied with the assimilating policies of the state could find a place in the society for themselves; all four Christian MPs elected in the 1935 Elections had beforehand claimed that they were Turkish. İsmat Zihni Özdamar, one of the MPs mentioned and the leader of the Turkish-Orthodox Church, argued: "we Turks want our children to study altogether in Turkish schools and speak in the Turkish language... Then, regardless of their religions, Mehmet, Dimitri, Kaspar and Mişon will coalesce in

these official schools under the Turkish flag, the Turkish teacher, inspiration and education. They will be raised as one Turkish element, devoted to their country". He ended his words by adding: "I am so happy that I am a Turk" (Çağaptay 2006). Although there were such examples, the struggle of the regime continued to fit the not-yet-Turkified non-Muslims and the Kurdish population to the Turkish identity.

The Turkification policies followed educational and legislative paths. As an illustration of the educational part, the textbooks that were Ottoman-centric until the ethnic facet of republican nationalism gained ground started to give wide coverage to the Turkish History and Language Theses, states that were established by Turks of Middle Asia before they met Islam, eugenics and the Darwinist theories. On the other side, the Surname Law necessitated every subject to adopt Turkish surnames, the Physical Training Law gave a definition of how nice-shaped, durable, thoughtful and courageous a Turk should be, whereas the Constitution granted the right to become a civil servant to every 'Turk' that had political rights.

During the rule of Mustafa Kemal, historians and linguists played an active role in building the Turkish nation as nationalism was shaped through their researches. However, the last word always belonged to the politicians. Mustafa Kemal assigned his adopted daughter Afet Inan to deal with the comprehension that Turks were a member of the yellow race. Not only Inan, but also many historians or even politicians committed themselves to prove that Turks are coming from the 'pure race', under the directions of Mustafa Kemal. Thus, Turkish History Thesis and Sun-Language Theory came into the picture. Under the positivist spirit of the period, any criticism against the theses were perceived as being against science itself.

5. Republican Nationalism

Due to the millet system that prevailed during the Ottoman Empire period, the Turks were one of the latest communities to embrace the idea of nationalism in the region. Ottomanism had been the leading ideology for decades and even during the CUP period, this idea gained recognition by many prominent figures. During the national struggle, Atatürk came across peasants who claimed that they were not willing to fight against the Greek advancement unless they invaded their estates (Ahmad 1993: 75). The indifference of the peasants to the advancement of the Greek armies in Western Anatolia reveals the lack of sense of a home territory, let alone awareness of an ethnic

nation. Another indicator for the lack of nationalist feelings among the peasants that constituted the highest population in agriculture-oriented Anatolia is the bands built up during 1910's as a reaction to the deteriorating economic situation due to everlasting wars. It is worthy of attention that some of those bands were formed by Turkish and Greek bandits together (Ibid).

Mustafa Kemal summarized the lack of nationalism among the community during the Ottoman period as "various societies in Ottoman Empire saved themselves by holding on to the national beliefs and the power the ideal of nation. As for us, we realized that we were different and strangers to them, when they chased us away from their lands with a stick" (ATAM: 306). The people who were 'chased away' from the Balkans and Caucasus, in fact contributed to the development of Turkish nationalism in late Ottoman and early republican periods. It is no coincidence that the CUP movement was born in Thessaloniki or a leading figure of Turkish nationalism, Akçura, emigrated from the Caucasus. In the meantime, the Muslim peasants who had migrated from the aforementioned regions and settled in Anatolia, helped the idea of nationalism mushroom in different parts of country. Akçura (1981) argues that Turkish nationalism was not a product of the Ottoman-Turkish bourgeoisie or the education system. According to him, the Turkish nationalism was developed through the foreign books, neighboring nations who raised a national awareness, students that were educated in Western Europe and the Turcology studies of the West on Turkish language and history that stimulated the Turks to go deeper. Mustafa Kemal (ATAM: 335) gave the hint of the transition to a new process in 1924, in which the spread of nationalism will begin, by mentioning that over 300 million Muslim people were kept under captivity due to their lack of national discipline, even though they were nurtured in moral terms by their parents and teachers. Education and inevitably the language of education were regarded as the pillars of the dissemination of nationalism by Mustafa Kemal.

During the Independence War, religion played the role of a unifying element between the masses as it dominated both the political and social spheres in the former system. However, things took a new turn after 1924. Kemalism, taking the dissemination of nationalism as its duty, brought secularism, common ideals, common culture and most importantly, language to the forefront. This meant that the religious element was used as a tool to reach the nationalist goals. In the same manner, the Turkish author Peyami Safa (1960: 35) specified that religion played an instrumental role against

nationalism by claiming that: "There are people who assert that the ideas of religion and nation during the Independence War were like two circles within each other, inseparable. There is no doubt that religious excitement also melted into the national excitement prevalent at the time. However, the religious excitement was not born out of an Islamic or Sharia-based thought... In fact, even the religious feelings at the time were nationalistic".

Safa (1960: 175) goes on to claim that two necessities, the national struggle which rescued the Turkish homeland and unity, and the need to construct the Turkish homeland and state of mind were the reasons why Kemalism was born. In order to fill the heads of the masses with the idea of secular republican nationalism, the religious factor had to be pulled out of the definition of Turkish nationalism after it was utilized during the war and in the negotiations about the definition of the minorities in Turkey in course of preparing the Lausanne Treaty. However, the Menemen Incident that took place in a small district in Western Turkey seven years after the establishment of the Republic, in which Lieutenant Kubilay was killed by the sectaries supporting the reestablishment of Sharia and the Caliphate, demonstrated the vitality of the religious factor among the masses and precisely how Mustafa Kemal would not easily extract it.

Among the determinants of Turkish nationalism, language stood out as the most substantial element republican system could hold on to, regarding both ethnic and civic aspects of republican nationalism. Under the circumstances in which Karpas (2002: 321) asserts that more than 6 million people have migrated to Modern Turkey in the last century (the population of Turkey in 1927 was 13.6 million), language had to play the most important role in the absence of religion as a tangible indicator, unlike common ideals or other cultural components. Arguably the most assertive act of republican nationalism on the subject of both language and religion, the Turkification of the call for prayer in 1932, drew reactions from the religious section. The biggest protest took place in Bursa in 1933, yet disbanded without any incident. Even so, Mustafa Kemal arrived on to the scene right after he heard the news; he abstracted the whole issue and the policies of the state by claiming that "It must be assured that the national language and national identity of the Turkish nation will be the essence and dominate in the entire life" (Balçık 2009: 103). Republican nation-building adopted the orientalist idea that everything that comes from West was superior to its Eastern counterpart and took up the 'white man's burden', neutralizing the role of Islam, which

was regarded as the basis of the backwardness in the society (Zeydanlıoğlu 2012: 102). The role of religion among the society was planned to be substituted with an idea of nationalism. In the words of Tekin Alp (previously Moiz Kohen), originally a Thessaloniki born Jew, a former CUP member and a Turkish nationalist who struggled for the Turkification of Jews under the flag of Kemalism: "Kemalism worshipped only one God, and that is nationalism" (Tekinalp 1998: 50).

In early 1930's, the six fundamental principles of RPP, namely republicanism, populism, nationalism, secularism, etatism and reformism were accepted. Those principles were to become the principles of the Turkish state constitutionally in 1937. A political party's principles becoming the principles of the state was not surprising in the Turkey of 1930's since the common denominator of the maxims of the time was 'one' as in one party, one nation, one state, one leader or one language (Yıldız 2001: 195). During the RPP Congress in 1935, Prime Minister Peker started his speech by expressing his satisfaction with the approximation of the Party and the State. He then claimed that a Turkish state that is not nationalist would be weak and lame on its way through a bright future. He also added that Turkey, being under the influence of many anarchist, Marxist, fascist, internationalist and caliphist ideas and propagandas from all directions, should hold on tight to the faith in nationalism. According to him, it is the state's mission to secure the doors of Turkey against those kind of ideas by highlighting nationalism (Ata Boun: 125).

6. Turkish Language and Education in the Republican System

Turkish Language and the Importance of Language in the Kemalist Era

As stated before, due to the mixing of Turkish language with the Arabic and Persian languages and the failure or unwillingness of the elites to disseminate their language, Ottoman and Turkish languages prevailed in different spheres. This caused the spoken and literary languages diverge from each other. Ziya Gökalp (1968: 13) called this dichotomy as 'language disease'. As it was to the most Ottoman intellectuals, standardization of language had also been the purpose of republican elites. In this instance however, secularization of language also emerged as a goal, as the elements defining the Turk have changed. Considering the 1927 census, Turkish was not the

native language of 2 million people (Dündar 1999) and according to Resit Galip's statement in 1932, the written Turkish (he adds that it should not be called Turkish) was comprehensible to only ten percent of 17 million Anadolu Turks despite the purification struggle of the 22-year-long Turkist movement (Turan 2006: 8).

After the success of the Alphabet Reform in 1928, due to the failure to gather the masses under the roof of Turkishness and the influence of the rise of authoritarianism throughout the world after the Great Depression, the language, which was regarded as a tool to disseminate nationalism, directly took part in secularizing the masses and creating myths. Atatürk (Yıldız, 2001: 145) expressed that there were scholars who did not predicate languages on races in the scientific world and claimed that even though that might be true for some communities, it should definitely be considered invalid for a Turk. Also, in the course book called 'Civic Information for the Citizen' authored by Inan with the contributions of Mustafa Kemal, it was remarked that "every Turk loves and endeavors to enhance his language. Moreover, Turkish is a holy treasure for the Turkish nation as the people are aware of the fact that their discipline, traditions, memories, interests and any other factor that shapes the nation is preserved by virtue of language; the Turkish language is both the heart and the mind of Turkish nation"⁷ (Inan 2000: 31). Also, Mustafa Kemal was of the opinion that linguistic consciousness in Balkans played a role in the collapse of Ottoman Empire. In the Language Congress, he stated: "Do you know why we have lost Balkans? There is only one reason and that is the Language Societies established by the Slavic research foundations. When they awakened their national consciousness by writing a history for the people who lived under our control, we receded to the borders of Thrace" (Causevic et al. 2010: 563). As seen from the discourse, it was a feature of the later republican nationalism that cultural elements (language to begin with) were politicized.

Although decorated with some ethnicist elements, the comprehension of Turkishness as the unity in language, ideals and culture continued in the 1930's. Mustafa Kemal occasionally referred to the 'pure Turk', adding the race element along the trio when purposive. However as long as the subject acknowledged the other three elements, race was not the deal. In the same manner, the 1931 Party Program of RPP laid speaking Turkish and adopting the Turkish culture as conditions for a Turkish citizen to

⁷ Author's translation.

become a member to the Party (TBMM). Mahmut Esat Bozkurt (1967: 298), Minister of Justice of Turkey between the years 1924-30, compared the German and Turkish nationalisms and deduced in 1940 that “while both are nationalists, German nationalism is racist. However, Turkish nationalism gives importance to language and culture, rather than kinship”⁸. Further, he went on to justify the statement of Mustafa Kemal “do not believe the one who does not share your blood” claiming that this advice surfaced as unity in language and culture in practice. This shows, the ethnicist facet of Kemalism played a supportive role in the background while a variant that is a mixture of ethnic and civic nationalisms was the mainframe. Regardless of the reason why republican nationalism was not keen on practicing racism (pressure of the international arena, lack of a strong state and ideological structure to put racism into force, the difficulty of defining the Turkish race anthropologically or the absence of a popular racist ideology among the masses), it would be legitimate to claim that language rather than race defined the borders of republican nationalism. Atatürk expressed his feelings about language in 1931 during his visit to Turkish Hearts as: “A Turk means language. Language is one of the most obvious features of a nationality. A Turk should first and above all speak Turkish” (Sinanoglu 2007: 1).

Education in the Republican System

Until the Tanzimat Edict, the state did not have concerns about the education system except for a few madrasas. Afterwards, the state got involved in the educational issues, establishing Western-type schools. In addition to these schools, the madrasas, minority schools and schools founded by the Western states as a means of soft power operated in the Empire and the Turkish Republic until the adoption of the Law on Unification of Education in 1924. Through this law, all educational institutions were united under the authority of the Ministry of National Education. The reason of the adoption was specified by the Minister of Education Vasıf Çınar as: “the members of a nation should be subject to one kind of education. A duality in the educational system would cause two types of people to be brought up. That is completely contradictory with the purposes of reaching unified emotions, thoughts and solidarity” (Sakaoglu 2003: 169). Besides, the republican elites symbolically displayed their national and

8 Author's translation.

secular character by abolishing the caliphate right at the day of the adoption of the law on education.

The unity in education was necessary to homogenize the society under a high culture, disseminating the idea of Turkish nationalism. The outcome of a successful educational system would be the sense of belonging of the communities living all over the country and the active social and political participation of the citizens who were beforehand vassals of the Sultan. Mustafa Kemal, in his speech in 1928 about the Romanization of the alphabet, mentioned to the raising of the children with a high culture and education, and the unification of culture in the country (TBMM 2011: 8). Also, a universal mandatory education system was thought to be beneficial in rising the literacy rates with the Latin alphabet, facilitating the dissemination of the nationalist ideas through print capitalism. Although unification under a high culture did not go as planned and vernacular culture and myths were appealed to, educational system did not lose importance. For instance, the Faculty of Language and History-Geography was established in 1935 with the aim of researching the Turkish history in the light of the Turkish history and language thesis. Furthermore in the opening speech of the 1937 legislative year, Mustafa Kemal expressed his plans to divide the country into three cultural areas and maintain the reformation process that was started with the establishment of Istanbul University in substitution for Darülfünun. For this purpose, two universities in Ankara and Van were to be established in order to make the people understand the ideologies of the national matters and transfer them from generation to generation (TBMM 2011: 65-66).

The purpose of the republican education system was in fact teaching the Turkish language to the non-Turkish speaking minorities before they could disseminate their ideology. Although all types of schools were united under the rule of the Ministry of Education instead of being shut down, the population of the students attending to the minority schools kept declining on grounds of the decrease of non-Muslim population in the country combined with the apprehension that the graduates of these schools would not be given reputable positions in the state and business life after the graduation. According to Bali (2000: 193), the population of students attending the Greek schools decreased from 300.000 to 17.329 between the years 1914 and 1928. In order to conform to the aspirations of the state to homogenize the society, the Jewish schools made the language of education Turkish. Moreover the Turkish Armed Forces, the

institution that carried out the leading role in the Westernization and modernization of the state and the society since the Tanzimat Era, had also become a part of the education system. With reference to the work of Webster (qtd. in Balçık 2009: 109) in 1939, ten percent of the literate people in Turkey learned how to read by means of the compulsory military service.

7. Republican Language Policies

Assuming the experience of the West to be the best solution, the positivist republican elites handled the language issue like natural sciences and considered that they could detach the language from its past and generate a new one, for the achievement of their political ends. The policy and decision makers determining the Turkish language policies were also mostly politicians or the historians and linguists under the influence of politicians, especially Mustafa Kemal. The interference of the state to language had been a subject to the discussions between intellectuals of different political standpoints. Conservatives criticized the language purification movement for impoverishing the language and breaking the link between the generations whereas Turkists thought that it would cut off the communication with the Turkic people living in the Soviet Union and for the leftists, the movement was a conspiracy to broaden the gap between the languages of the literary and colloquial languages.

A historical analysis of language policies of the Turkish state reveals that the configuration of the republican language policies are in parallel with the conception of republican nationalism throughout the 1920's and 1930's. In this chapter, the alphabet reform that took place in 1920's and aimed secularization, Westernization and the dissemination of nationalism through increasing the literacy rate will be analyzed in the first place. Secondly, Turkish Language Reform, the continuation of corpus planning through mid-1930's with the dream of creating a secular and standard Turkish language is given coverage. Thirdly, the Turkish History Thesis, Sun-Language Thesis and the language congresses as instruments of status planning and their analogy with the ethnicist facet of republican nationalism in 1930's will be elaborated. Lastly, the campaign 'Citizen, Speak Turkish!' which was initiated by the republican missionaries right after the alphabet reform in an attempt to homogenize the society, albeit suppressed by the government itself will be emphasized.

7.1 Turkish Alphabet Reform

According to Andrew Robinson, “writing is among the greatest inventions of human history, perhaps the greatest invention since it made history possible” (qtd. in Moran 2010: 81). By virtue of the symbols that are written down, people are able to transfer thoughts, stories and rules to other people or to the next generations. As an indispensable part of the language, alphabets were not excluded from the political sphere and decisions after the Turkish modernization process. Like the official languages, alphabets became an object of power in Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic.

The supporters of Westernization in the Empire started to suggest the adoption of the Latin alphabet during the second half of the 19th century but the majority of the elites found it dangerous for an Empire in which Islam plays an important role to adopt the alphabet of the Western world. However, both the advocates and the opposers of the adoption of the Latin alphabet were aware of the fact that the existing Ottoman alphabet which is an Arabic-based alphabet was not adequate to fully function for the vowel-rich Turkish language. Therefore, an evolution of the alphabet took place gradually, if not an entire change in variety. The first attempt to reform the alphabet was initiated Ahmet Cevdet in mid-19th century. 1860’s witnessed the discussions about the reason of the low literacy rate in Ottoman Empire in which the Iran ambassador Malkom Han and Namık Kemal were also involved in. Namık Kemal maintained that the reason was the lack of quality and widespread education rather than the difficulty of the Ottoman alphabet while Malkom Han put the blame on the alphabet (Lewis 2000: 423). Until the last alphabet reform was brought into effect by Enver Paşa during the First World War, many politicians and intellectuals like Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Paşa and Recaizade Mahmut Ekrem offered solutions of their own.

Despite the efforts of Westernization and modernization in the field of education, the literacy rate among the Ottoman population was extremely low as the non-modernized rural communities constituted the majority of the society. The efforts of the CUP could barely increase the literacy rate of the population of the successor Turkish Republic to 9% in 1924, four years before the alphabet reform (Lewis 1999: 37). Even though the literacy rate was extremely low in Ottoman Empire and the political elites were striving to increase it, adopting a different alphabet had never been the case since the alphabet meant more to the elites. As Coulmas (qtd. in Aytürk 2010: 113) states:

"Once written norms are established, they attract emotional attachment; this attachment is so strong indeed that discussions about the reform of a given orthography or script often resemble a religious war more than a rational discourse". Kılıçzade Hakkı, a pro-Westernization intellectual that was later elected as a deputy in the parliament of Turkish Republic, challenged the Shaikh-al Islam in 1914 by asking him if he would demand the French people to give up their classy language and alphabet and adopt the Arabic one, supposing that they wanted to collectively convert to Islam. After asking this rhetorical question, he added: "I do not expect the answer to be 'Yes', but if it is I shall make so bold as to reply, 'With this mentality you cannot make the world Muslim.' If I am given the answer 'No, there is no harm in it' I shall make this request: 'Give a fetva permitting us Turks also to use the Latin letters.' No, we are no more Arab than the French are" (Lewis 1999: 30). Having its roots in the late Ottoman period as mentioned, the eradication of the Ottoman alphabet was going to be rendered possible by the strictly secular Republic. Also, along with its religious association, Gökalp and Köprülüzade Fuat were of the opinion that the adoption of another script would cause the national culture and cultural accumulation melt away.

Three years after the establishment of the Republic, the law publicizing a Language Council that would be engaged in the issues of alphabet and preparation of a Turkish dictionary was proposed. Besim Atalay preferred to call this council as the 'Committee on the Unification of Language' and offered a ban on all minority languages (Aytürk 2008: 279). However, this radical opinions were not embraced by the representatives and the Language Council was commissioned to study the alphabet issue. During the same year, the Independence Courts were set up, crushing the opposers while articles in the media in favor of the adoption of Latin alphabet started to come forward. President Mustafa Kemal followed the studies of the council closely. To make it easier for him, the Council even moved to Dolmabahçe Palace, where Mustafa Kemal spent the summer, in 1928. The mission of the Council was designated as working on the most feasible variety of Latin alphabet for Turkish, rather than deciding on whether the alphabet should be changed. Despite the objections of the pan-Turkists to the change due to the fact that all Muslim Turks were planned to be united under the same language and (Arabic) alphabet, Turanism was not the priority of the non-irredentist republican nationalism. Besides, the political elites abstained from any pan-Turkist policies so as not to make Soviet Union suspicious. Moreover, the general opinion in the Turcology congress in Azerbaijan in 1926 that Latin alphabet is the most suitable

one for the Turkic languages caused the attitudes of the Turkists towards the reform change (Gündoğdu 2014: 11). Thus, the new alphabet was introduced in August 1928, the law was enacted in November 1928 and it was made obligatory for the official correspondence to be made with the new alphabet starting from June 1929. It is worth mentioning that courses were first given to the deputies, teachers and journalists before the law entered into force, revealing the importance attached to education and media along with politics.

The alphabet reform was aimed to support republican nationalism in three ways: Westernization, dissemination of nationalism and secularization. In a speech Mustafa Kemal gave in August 1928, he claimed that the Turkish nation will stand by the civilization of the universe with both its mentality and writing (TSK: 257). With the words of Celal Nuri who had been deputy in both Istanbul and Ankara parliaments and a prominent journalist: thanks to the alphabet reform, "the Turkish nation is departing from the Asiatic bloc, of which it was an integral part so far. It is leaving forever the past to which it has been attached. As a result of this revolution, the Turks, being a member of the Ural-Altaic nations, are definitely joining the European world, like the other Ural-Altaic nations, the Hungarians, the Finns and the Estonians, who have progressed much" (Aytürk 2010: 124).

According to the official figures, the literacy rate increased from 9% in 1924 to almost 20% in 1934 and to slightly over 30% in 1945 (MEB). Independent of whether the literacy rate started to increase by virtue of the new alphabet or the education system, this achievement yielded result in the dissemination of nationalism. First and foremost, increasing literacy rate contributed to bridging the gap between the elites and the masses, a problem expressed by many intellectuals ever since Tanzimat Period. The comprehension of the masses of the laws and the ideas, and the dissemination of the idea of republican nationalism was made possible by this means. Print capitalism, through the increasing number of publications, intensified the process. Also, education was an essential component of republican nationalism; after the law was enacted, two million people were taught how to read and write in four years through the literacy campaign.

Just as the Ottoman alphabet was identified with Islam and Islamic traditions, what the Latin alphabet would evoke in the minds of the population was regarded as crucial by the political elite. Right after the law of 'The Acceptance and Implication of the New

Turkish Letters' was passed, Mustafa Kemal expressed that this 'Turkish alphabet with the Latin basic' is a way to get rid of the ignorance (Atam: 195). It is noteworthy that the Turkish element of the new alphabet was strongly stressed. As for the secular side of the reform, the adoption of the Latin alphabet and giving up the Ottoman alphabet was meaningful by itself; this meant the alienation of the next generations who would not learn the old alphabet to the literature of the last centuries. According to Ahmad (1993: 82), "the implications of this step were very great, very deep, and long-term. This reform, more than virtually any other, loosened Turkey's ties with the Islamic world to its east and irrevocably forced the country to face west". Regarding this approach, it is safe to claim that the republican regime successfully accomplished the alphabet reform in view of the Western and secular meanings the new alphabet carries and the rapidly increasing literacy rate which paved the way for the dissemination of republican nationalism. Thereafter, another form of corpus planning, the purification, Turkification and secularization of the Turkish language through eliminating the Arabic and Persian words from the language came into play in the beginning of 1930's.

7.2 Turkish Language Reform and the Language Society

After the adoption of the Latin alphabet, the mission of creating a Turkish dictionary was assigned to the Language Council. This dictionary was planned for both corpus and status planning reasons as it would have standardized the language and unified all other vernaculars spoken in Turkey under the Istanbul vernacular, rendering it the standard Turkish. The Council arrived at the decision to translate 'Le Petit Larousse', the well-known French dictionary, to Turkish. The translation of a dictionary in French, which was renowned for its richness and elegance, would have proven the abundance of the Turkish language in the viewpoint of the Council. However, Prime Minister Ismet İnönü's claim that the dictionary would serve as a fence around the Turkish language against the flow of the linguistic effects of both East and West and his requirement that it should be finalized within a year drew the reaction of the Minister of Education Vasıf Çınar. The Minister asserted that a year is a very short period for such a serious task that would require methodologies. He also added that he did not see any reason to downgrade the Turkish language by heading towards Uzbek with the intention of excluding the Arabic words, especially taking into account that the language was already purified in the last decades (Aytürk 2008: 286).

The Gökalpist and Ottomanist figures were still active in the parliament and the institutions during the 1920's. The backlash of the Minister was also not independent from the opinions of those figures in the Council. The moderates still active in the political sphere hindered the Council from taking a radical purist twist, insomuch that the head of the Council, Mehmet Emin, had to justify their actions to the Minister by articulating that fabrication of a language (the purists were ascribed the role of word fabricators by the conservatives and the moderates) was not their intention. He claimed that the foreign words in Turkish have already been Turkified and the reason of the creation of the dictionary was not the exclusion of the foreign words but the inclusion of the Anatolian dialects. This caused the purist tone of the Council vanish (Ibid). Putting the attempt of purification aside, the Council concentrated on the dictionary. In this instance, it was the turn of the purists to lash out at the Council. In 1930, disappointed by the deliberativeness and fruitlessness of the process, Akçura sarcastically asked in the congress how the works were going. Caught between the clash of purist elites who had high hopes from the Council and the conservative and moderate elites who were against the purification of the language, the Council was worn out. A group of opposers of purification gathered under the leadership of Talat Bey and decreased the budget of the Council to a mere 10 Turkish Lira in 1931 claiming that the Council was fabricating words and wasting the budget, signifying its abolition (Ibid).

This incident reveals that even though Turkey was ruled with a single-party system in which Mustafa Kemal was the policy and decision maker, the elites were not uniform in their opinions. Although the republican regime attempted to discard the Ottoman past, it was not easy to put aside the heritage of the Empire. For instance, a considerable number of Ottomanist bureaucrats served in the institutions despite the rise of Turkism in the late Empire period. Considering the statistic Kaya reveals, 85% of the Ottoman Empire civil servants that graduated from Mülkiye (public service academy) preserved their duties in the Turkish Republic (Kaya 2013: 41), some of them assuming the moderate agent role in the Ministry of Education in which the Council was affiliated to. The noncooperation of the elites did not remain limited to the political sphere. The Council members also got in touch with the professors in Darülfünun and requested the creation of new terms from their own fields, predominantly in Turkish. However, the professors withstood against the intervention of the members to their fields with

political reasons (Aytürk 2008: 285). This displays that the state centric or monolithic approaches should not always be the case for the Turkish language policies.

Mustafa Kemal was aware of the fact that the Council was under fire from the both purist and moderate-conservative elites and presumably preferred not to interfere with the process since any action would have harmed the government under his rule. Regarding the fact that the Turkish Language Society was established just one year after the dissolution of the Council and pursued purist policies, it is also likely that Mustafa Kemal was also not content with the Gökalpist stance of the Council. Considering the trouble Mustafa Kemal went through, the establishment of the Turkish Language Society was planned with another approach. The Society was going to be 'independent', having a budget of their own, detached from the state institutions, ministries or the government unlike the Council. This was planned for the Society to acquire an academic structure. However, the budget was still provided by the state and the members were assigned by Mustafa Kemal. Established in July 1932, the mission of the institution was determined as "to bring light to the beauty and richness of the Turkish language and to raise it to the eminence it is worthy of among other languages" (TDK). The establishment of the Society is considered to be the beginning of the Turkish Language Reform.

The Society got a jumpstart in 1932 in all spheres through implementing different methods in the interest of Turkifying the language by gathering vernacular Turkish words from different corners of the country, analyzing different Turkic languages and the pre-Islamic Turkish language and reproducing or modifying neologisms through the instrument of Turkic or Western languages. Through the mobilization of the officers in different places of the country and their interaction with the communities, 126.000 words from the vernacular language were collected and more than 33.000 of those words were retained after scanning. On the other side the researches obtained another 90.000 words from their analyses. The Tarama Journal issued in 1934 put forward 25.000 new Turkish words in exchange for 8.000 Ottoman words; the result was a chaos. As an example, Lewis (1999: 50-51) mentions a new field of occupation called 'ikameci', that showed up during this period. These people generally used to work in the newspaper companies and were responsible for the 'updating' of the language of the journalists and columnists. Their duty was to randomly choose a new Turkish equivalent for the words written in the old Turkish by looking up from the publications

of the Society. After this point of ambiguity, the extremely purist practice of the reform slowed down.

Although language issue was discussed by the politicians in both political and linguistic respects, the political component had always been in the foreground. As a matter of fact, the ones expressing opinions about the language issue always being politicians already reveals that language, as an element of culture, was substantially politicized. With regards to linguistics, Ihsan Bey expressed during the First Language Congress held in September-October 1932 that the Arabic and Persian words in the Turkish language seemed weird and more importantly they hampered the learning process of children in the schools since the terms did not make any sense in Turkish. Similarly, Resat Nuri (Müzakere Zabıtları: 365) complained about the lack of around 40.000 professional terms compared to Western languages and the difficulties the authors and translators experience on that account. Hüseyin Cahit, the only contrarian in the Congress, criticized the modernist and positivist approach towards the language by claiming that only grammar, not the vocabulary should be the concern of the elites since the language has already been reforming and purifying itself. As for the issue about the terms, he proposed the usage of the terms with Latin or different western roots rather than the Arabic or Persian terms as much as possible, an opinion that was also embraced by Mustafa Kemal himself (Kerimoglu 2008: 112). It can be noticed that even the one and only moderate member in the Congress was in pursuit of secularizing the language by substituting the eastern terms with the western ones and that even the professional terms in the language were regarded as a tool for modernization. The adoption of the western words in the place of their Arabic or Persian counterparts and even some grammatical rules borrowed from the European languages in creating the new Turkish reveal that the Turkification aspect in the reform played an instrumental role against the Western and secular aspects.

From the political standpoint, it can be claimed that the language was regarded as a tool which could be brought to perfection, in accordance with the modernist point of view. A secularized and standardized pure Turkish language was to be spoken and reflect the classless and non- conflicting society. The turn of the reform towards the vernacular language provides insights about the preference of the Kemalists to create a vernacular cultural ground due to the lack of a deep rooted education system and a literacy rate below Mustafa Kemal's imagination, preventing the dissemination of the

high culture through print capitalism. Aside from the standardization of the language, the goal of the purification movement was to draw a line under the Ottoman and Islamic past and make a new Western and secular start. According to Heyd (1954: 21): "in creating of the language, the needs of days to come, and not historical continuity... had to be the determining factor". Similarly it is disclosed by Lewis that right after the Language Congress in which decisions about the purification of the language were given, "there was great euphoria round Atatürk's table. He himself was saying, 'We are going to defeat the Ottomans. Turkish is going to be a language as free and as independent as the Turkish nation, and with it we shall enter the world of civilization at one go'" (Lewis 1999: 49).

7.3 The Language Theories, Language Congresses and the Sun-Language Theory

Status planning in the language was considered as important as corpus planning by the republican elite. With the purpose of building up the reputation of the Turkish identity in the international arena and constituting the national consciousness and pride, language was regarded as a vital instrument. During the 19th century, comparative linguistics dominated the academic field. According to the inflectional superiority thesis which was popular during the 19th century, the inflectional European languages were superior to the agglutinative or isolated languages of the non-European societies, justifying the predominance of the western world in the fields of politics, economics, military etc. This theory was, in a way, the adaptation of the Darwinian 'survival of the fittest' to the sphere of language (Aktürk 2004: 4). Meanwhile, disclosing the viewpoint of the West towards the Turkic people, Müller classified Turkic languages under the nomad languages and went on claiming that "So far as history can reach back, no lasting nucleus of society or civilization has ever been formed in these vast Turanian wildernesses. Empires were no sooner founded there than they were scattered again like the sand clouds of the desert; no laws, no songs, no stories outlived the age of their authors" (Aytürk 2004: 6). Comparing the Turkic languages with French, Müller also asserted that one can trace the roots of the words in French while it is impossible to do so in the Turkic languages since 'tradition, society and literature' were needed for the root to be apprehensible. Aytürk (Ibid) deduces that the reputability of a Turk from the European point of view is expressed clearly in the book 'The Little Prince'. In the book, the asteroid in which the main character have

lived was once seen through the telescope. "That was by a Turkish astronomer, in 1909. On making his discovery, the astronomer had presented it to the International Astronomical Congress, in a great demonstration. But he was in Turkish costume, and so nobody would believe what he said. Grown-ups are like that..." Mustafa Kemal and his sphere took it as their duty to guard and raise the blackened reputation of the Turks. This, in his opinion, would have contributed to the construction and popularization of the national identity within the country. For this reason, allegations ranging from Turkish language being an Indo-European language or the heir of Sumer language to the Sun-Language Theory and Turkish History Thesis in which Turks were represented as the source of all languages and civilizations were made in the language congresses.

It was the time for the Turks to start their own discussions and establish their own theories. The language congresses that took place in 1932, 1934 and 1936 were the occasions where the scholars or the elites interested in linguistics could make themselves heard. Although the main theme in the congresses would be the Turkish language, the main goal was the glorification of the Turkish nation. Köprülüzade Fuat, a scholar who was against the reform in script, called the commencement of the language congresses the beginning of the 'Turkish Renaissance' and allegedly thus became the dean of the Faculty of Literature of Istanbul University, the University which was established in place of the abolished opposing Darülfünun (Taştan 2013: 112). Torn between the unavoidable necessity of shifting towards the Western civilization and the feeling of insecurity regarding the recent past with the West, the theses of the Turkish scholars and researchers generally represented the Turkish nation as an actor in the civilized world from the beginning, introducing the themselves as the cousins of western Europeans, or even as their ancestors in some instances. These theses served as means of paving the way for the swift modernization and transition of the Turkish nation over the course of building it both within and outside the country.

The First Language Congress

The majority of the participants of the First Language Congress were teachers; the second biggest occupational group in number was the deputies and the academicians were the third biggest group. Since the speeches that were to be given in the congress were first viewed by a committee, no oppositions were made except for the incident of

Hüseyin Cahit as mentioned earlier. Apart from that, there is no clue that would make one think that the speeches were not made in the frame determined by the political elites. Moreover, the administrative staff of the Society was also selected from the inner circle of Mustafa Kemal. The effects of the Arabic and Persian words that entered the Turkish language, the assertions that Turkish is an Indo- European language, the relationship of Turkish with the Sami languages and the fact that Sumerian language is the predecessor of the Turkish language were mentioned in the congress. Some of the theses presented and their presenters in the congress are as followed (Müzakere Zabıtları): 'Turkish Philology, Turkish is an Indo-European Language' (Dr. Saim Bey), Comparison of Turkish with Sami Languages (Samih Rifat Bey), The Connections between Turkish, Sumerian and Indo-European Languages (Agop Martayan), The Methods to Purify the Turkish Language (Şeref Bey).

The main motive of the language reform, purification of the Turkish language, was a weighty matter in the congress. Abdullah Battal expressed that the pure Turkish has lost its beauty and richness after borrowing the Arabic and Persian words and added that the pureness should be searched in the dialects of Anatolia. Likely, Hasan Ali made use of the term 'folk' all through his speech about the great role of folk poets in keeping the language pure and brought forward the importance of the vernacular language (Özdemir 2012: 2518).

In addition to the speeches about the purification of the language, the most remarkable topic was the relationship between the Sumerian language and Turkish. Some debaters in the congress presumably were aware of the fact that Turkish language is not a member of the Indo- European and Semitic language families hence concentrated on the Sumerian language to prove the dignity of the Turkish language. It was both easy and favorable to lay claims on the Sumerian language since it was language isolate, meaning that it belonged to none of the language families and was the language of Sumerians, the ancient civilization that developed the writing system. Not only Sumerians but also Hittites, being an ancient Anatolian civilization, were claimed by the spokesmen (it is not a coincidence that two banks established in 1930's were named Etibank and Sümerbank). The claim laid on the Hittite and Sumerian civilizations was also useful in facilitating the work of Kemalists - hammering the idea of the possession of Anatolia by the Turks into people's heads. This assertion also

comprised a basis for the protective attitude of the republican elite for Anatolia against the Armenians and Greeks.

The Second Language Congress

The Second Language Congress took place in August 18-23, 1934 in Dolmabahçe Palace; Mustafa Kemal participated in each and every assembly. Although the speeches were inspected by a commission beforehand, Mustafa Kemal got angry during the speech titled "The First Turkish Language Reminiscences in the Russian Language" given by Caferoglu Ahmet and left the hall. The moderator consequently asked him to leave his speech unfinished. The content of the discussion is still unknown (Karahan 1999: 846). Republican nationalism interpreted language with a modernist understanding, regarding it as an element that could be brought to perfection through intervention and therefore any criticism against this stance was counted as an attack on science.

During the congress, some spokesmen claimed the kinship of Turkish and Indo-European languages along with the connection of the Turkish language with the Sumerian language and further purification acts. However, the motives of the republican elite to prove their theses right are far more noteworthy than the way they tried to do so. In 1930's, the swift Westernization of the Turkish nation was the case and the speakers of the Indo-European languages constituted most of the civilized (Western) world. The motives of the Kemalists can be observed in the book Emre has published in 1934, the same year as the Second Language Congress. He argued that: "If this [the Turkish origin of the Indo-European languages] can be proven clearly, the status of our language and of our nation and race among other nations and languages will change... they (Europe) will acknowledge that ancient Turkish as their ancestor and we will consider those languages our cousins; arrogance and condescension will be a thing of past... We will join that great civilized family with the status of a grandfather" (qtd. in Aytürk 2004: 11-12).

In other words, the nationalistic concerns of the republican elite overrode their scientific concerns; what they cared about was rendering Turkishness desirable within the country by filling the gap caused by the exclusion of Islam with myths and increasing its reputation outside the country.

In addition to the submissions of the spokesmen in the congress, it can be observed that ethno- symbolic elements that were built on the prehistoric ages started to arise.

On the third day of the second congress, Yusuf Ziya (TDK 1934: 60) expressed his faith in the demonstration of the fact that Turkish language, just like the glorious and dignified history of the Turkish nation, had been the source of the civilizations and the mother of all of the world languages. He expressed that this fact has been revealed thanks to the path of research and study lightened up by the splendor of Atatürk's eternal mastermind. Resid Rahmeti Arat, (TDK 1934: 63) in his speech about the Uyghur language, asserted that Turkish nation has successfully carried out the duty of creating the civilization and that the Turkish language is as old as the nation. On the fourth day of the congress, Tahsin Ömer made a speech that could be specified as the threshold of a new epoch. Tahsin Ömer, who would get the surname Mayatepek months later and would be appointed as the ambassador in Mexico talked about the similarities between the Maya language and Turkish, expressed that there are 120 common words in those languages and finished the discussion by claiming that Mayas are of Turkish descent. This exhibits that the republican nationalism diverged from the ethnic dimension and took a mythical form.

Sun-Language Theory and the 3. Language Congress

As mentioned in the Language Reform section, a state of chaos prevailed in the language sphere in 1935. More than one replacement were offered for the Arabic and Persian words and that gave way to a clutter of words, especially in the media. The emergence of the Sun-Language Theory which alleges that Turkish is the protolanguage coincides exactly with this period of chaos.

In 1935, the Austrian scholar called Kvergic sent his unpublished article, which claimed that Turkish was the protolanguage, to Ahmet Cevat Emre, a member of the executive committee of the Society; however it was not taken into account. Even so, when he decided to send his work directly to Mustafa Kemal, he attracted considerable attention. The contribution of a European scholar would have made the theory that was expressed by some Turkish figures so far look more scientific and less chauvinist. Thus, a mutual symbiotic relationship between Mustafa Kemal and Kvergic started. The following developments can be traced to a certain extent from the government correspondences. According to the comprehensive research of Aytürk (2009), a budget was set for Kvergic by the Turkish state and the Turkish embassy in Vienna was in touch with him. However, he met with reactions from the political elite when he proposed to visit a library in Finland to make a research on Mongolian, Manchu and

other Turkic languages, and requested funding for it. In reply, Dilmen indicated that he was disappointed to see him not cutting loose from the European perspective and that the goal of the Society and the Theory was to grace the Turkish language by proving that it is the source of the Semitic and Indo-European languages. In response, Kvergic declared that he was misunderstood and clarified the reason why he was going to Finland as to investigate the roots of Turkish as the protolanguage. As far as the correspondences are concerned, Kvergic does not make the impression of an independent scholar. He was rather an actor that was made use of, for the sake of proving the grandeur of the Turkish language.

This time, the media organs that were all close to the government started to vindicate the Sun- Language Theory, striving to justify the actions to keep the foreign words in the language. The Ulus newspaper which acted like the press agent of RPP allocated half of its front page everyday between the 2nd and 21st of November 1935 to prove that 60 foreign words (mostly Arabic) had Turkish origins (Lewis 1999: 58). The report of the Office of Secretary General of the Society filed in the Third Language Congress points out in the same manner that “the Sun- Language Theory has facilitated the language studies initiated for the purpose of proving that the words that were considered to be foreign origin were of Turkish origin. Thus it is no more necessary to sacrifice those words” (TDK 1936: 12-13). Similarly according to prominent scholars like Ercilasun and Lewis, the driving force behind this theorization was to prove that all languages (including Arabic and Persian) were originated from the Turkish language and therefore cancel the purification movement.

The theory also was to go hand in hand with the Turkish History Thesis that rose as a reaction to the Islam-centric history writing during the Ottoman Empire period and the viewpoint of the West which looked down on the Turkish history. According to the Turkish History Thesis, Anatolia had been the cradle of Turks for the last 7.000 years and the civilization was spread from Middle Asia to West through Turks. Inan, who defined Sumerians and Hittites as the ancestors of the Turks and the founders of civilization in Anatolia and Mesopotamia during the 3. Congress, claimed that “the originality of the Turkish language explicitly demonstrates the historical existence of the Turks and the prevalence of this existence. In this respect, Turkish History Society and Turkish Language Society have an indissoluble bond. Those two institutions are two enlightened monuments that should rise together and complete each other” (TDK

1936: 6-7), revealing that the language played the principal role in Turkish history writing. It draws attention that the non-irredentist republican nationalism, having signed the national pact as early as 1919, made use of language as a both cultural and political actor to identify with the antic Anatolian civilizations rather than falling into the same line with the expansionist Ottoman Empire that reigned over a huge territory. Moreover, in an effort to put the Kurdish factor out of action, the names of the cities (Diyarbakır, Siirt, Erzincan and more), geographical formations and dwelling units were 'proven' to be pure Turkish. In the period that ethnic nationalist, or even ethnicist, policies prevailed, the appropriation of Anatolia stands out as a civic nationalist step.

Apart from the advantages mentioned, during the period of republican nationalism of 1930's in which Islam lost its influence, the Theory was to build up a Turkish image to be proud of that was independent from Islam and influenced by the Western civilizations. The main reason why the pre-Islam Turkish history was emphasized was to rule out the Islamic factor and ascribe another meaning to Turkishness. Taking the historical context into account, it would be proper to consider history as comprised of processes rather than moments. Therefore, regarding the continuous Westernization of the Turks since the Tanzimat, it is clear that the purpose of the republican nationalism and the Theories were not actually to revert the Turks to the pre-Islamic era. For instance, the adoption of the Latin alphabet had started to be discussed after Tanzimat and adopted in 1928; however not even the most romantic Turkists brought the Göktürk (old Turkic) alphabet for discussion. In his book *Çankaya*, Atay (1969: 199) expressed: "To be honest, our language and history was neither what Ottoman intellectuals thought it was, nor what Atatürk period forced it to be. The language and history was necessary to make the Turk believe in his own character and that he could create a civilized society outside of the Orient-Islamic world. Atatürk did not shy away from internalizing even the most exaggerated claims of the linguists and historians from time to time, in order to save the Turkish nation from the inferiority complex".

The teachers constituted the majority of the participants in the Third Language Congress that took place in 1936, too. Same as before, deputies and eventually the academicians constituted the second and third greatest majority respectively. Also, a remarkable amount of linguists from different countries were invited to the Congress. However Sun-Language Theory, the major subject in the Congress, did not attract sufficient attention from the guests. While most of the participants did not comment on

the theory or contended themselves with articulating the novelty of the thesis, one foreign professor who taught Latin in Istanbul University indicated that “with its universal character, the Sun-Language Theory is the latest evidence that Turkey desires to define itself as a member of the great family of humankind” (Lewis 1999: 62), driving forward the political and functional role of the Theory rather than its actuality. After the Congress, the Theory entered a period of stagnation and following the death of Atatürk, it was hardly mentioned.

7.4 The Language Campaigns and Policies towards Minorities

As specified, indifference of the state to the linguistic diversities is not conceivable. The language that would be spoken in the assembly, the literary language used in official correspondence and even the language of the public notices should be determined, and the decision is most likely to be a political one or at least have political causes and effects. The state is the most important and powerful actor in language planning whether it ascribes further political meanings to language or not. First and foremost the official language, which regulates the power relations in the society by serving as the means of communication not only in political sphere but also in economic and cultural spheres, is the greatest tool for language and political planning. According to Horowitz (1985: 219), the language is a symbol of domination and “the status of the language is a symbol of newfound group dignity. Claims for official status for a language are typically demands for an authoritative indication that some people have a legitimate claim to greater respect, importance, or worth in the society than have some others”. Apart from that, universal education, compulsory military duty, power of sanction on media, law enforcement body and some state institutions serve as tools in this respect.

The linguistic awareness in Ottoman Empire started to rise after the Tanzimat Period; it became more essential for the non-Turkish people to learn the language as Turkish was made the official language and being able to speak and read Turkish was set out as a condition to become a civil servant or a member of the parliament by the Constitution of 1876. The claim of Greece in 1894 on the city of Janina based upon the assertion that Greek is the most spoken language in the city shook the political elite up, reminding the importance of language in politics. Later on, language, especially in the field of education, had been a highly focused matter for the CUP too. The Committee decided in their meeting in Thessaloniki in November 1910 to make Turkish

primary education obligatory for all schools, including the schools of minorities, throughout the Empire. The goal of this policy was specified by the CUP themselves as to denationalize the non-Turkish community and indoctrinate the Turkish nationalism (Landau 1981: 48). The First World War that broke out four years later did not slacken the pace CUP. In the wartime period, CUP also laid hands on the business sphere. Under their rule, the use of Turkish language in business writings were made obligatory and the Ottoman Bank, which was actually owned by the French and English companies, issued the first Turkish share certificates (Semiz 2014: 239). Their intention was the consolidation of the presence of Turks in the business life, thus rendering them powerful economically.

After the CUP period, the Lausanne Treaty signed in 1923 granted the minority status to Greeks, Armenians and Jews in Turkey. The articles in the Lausanne Treaty about the free use of language of the minorities in Turkey were as followed⁹:

In particular, they shall have an equal right to establish, manage and control at their own expense, any charitable, religious and social institutions, any schools and other establishments

Notwithstanding the existence of the official language, adequate facilities shall be given to Turkish nationals of non-Turkish speech for the oral use of their own language before the Courts (Article 39) for instruction and education, with the right to use their own language and to exercise their own religion freely therein (Article 40)

As regards public instruction, the Turkish Government will grant in those towns and districts, where a considerable proportion of non-Moslem nationals are resident, adequate facilities for ensuring that in the primary schools the instruction shall be given to the children of such Turkish nationals through the medium of their own language (Article 41)

Although the proportion of non-Muslims declined during the late Ottoman and early republican periods, according to the census of 1927, more than 15% of the population had a native language other than Turkish. Furthermore, the early-Republican Istanbul was home to a greater proportion of minorities as the mother tongue of 27% percent

⁹ Quoted from the website of Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs: http://www.mfa.gov.tr/lausanne-peace-treaty-part-i_-political-clauses.en.mfa

of the population of Istanbul was not Turkish, the first three languages spoken by the minorities being Greek (91.902), Armenian (45.225) and Ladino (39.199) respectively (Dündar 199: 157). Almost all Armenians in Turkey could speak Turkish whereas some Greeks and very few Jews could do so. According to the Turkish nationalist Jew Professor Avram Galanti (1928: 65) who was a member of CUP, served as a deputy in Turkish Republic and advocated the assimilation of the Jews in Turkey, the only way to assimilate the minorities was to make Turkish the education language in all schools and stages. Likely, Tekin Alp also elaborated on the importance of the adoption of the Turkish language as a native language by the minorities. He claimed that one has to internalize the Turkish language not only as the official language but also as a mother tongue to become a real Turk as speaking the same language means thinking in the same form (Yıldız 2001: 272).

As specified, the 1920's in Turkey was the era of extreme secularization and in the process of nation-building, the republican regime aspired to homogenize the society. On account of the fading of the religious factor from the political sphere, if not from the minds of the people, language remained the only substantial element people could hold on to while defining the 'Turk'. Although the minorities in Turkey were not unwilling to learn Turkish in the long term and did not act restlessly, the missionaries of the impetuous republican regime, which is known to have made the westernizing reforms in a short period of time and taken swift measures against the opposers, were not patient with the minorities. In January 1928, the student council of Darülfünun Law School decided to start a campaign to promote speaking Turkish. Afterwards, the leader of the council required some actions to be taken to put a ban on speaking any other language than Turkish in public spaces, most especially in Istanbul. In a bilateral meeting between the student council and the Turkish Hearts, it was decided to post bills, hang out signs, give conferences in the schools to increase awareness, establish a commission to teach Turkish in the country and inspect the Turkish education at the schools. The Turkish Hearts also made contact with the media proprietors and the mayor of Istanbul and additionally obtained a fund of 1000 Turkish Lira from the Ministry of Education. The campaign became popular especially in Western Turkey, where most non-Muslim tradesman lived and the welfare level was higher than the Turkish average. In Izmir, a port city in Western Turkey, the students of the Teachers School made public that they would be analyzing the billboards and advertisements to see if they are convenient (Aslan 2007: 250-251). Many ideas ranging from boycotting

the shops owned by the non-Muslim minorities to their resettlement were brought forward by the members of the student groups and the civil society organizations such as the Turkish Hearts. The campaign started was named 'Citizen! Speak Turkish', and it became almost impossible for the minorities to have a conversation or read newspapers in their own languages in public spaces (Bali 2006: 2-3). The prominent actors of the campaign were the university professors, students and the media. However, when the incidents in Edirne, a city with a 4% Jewish population, grew bigger with the impact of the imams, the governor felt the need to interfere before violence took over. He ordered the removal of the signs and that action led to the demonstration of approximately 300 students. The students clashed with the police, the Education Ministry and the Interior Ministry warned the republican missionaries not to go beyond the laws (Aslan 2007: 262). In consequence of the incidents, one of the executives of a hometown newspaper, Edirne Postası, was put on trial (Ibid). As a result of the confrontation of the republican administrators and their fiery missionaries, voices from the press close to the government started to raise, claiming that such movements would put Turkey in a difficult position in the international arena. As for the Cumhuriyet columnist Ishak, education, rather than violence, was the key to the dissemination of the Turkish language (Ibid). Although the campaign ceased to exist in the same year, the pressure put on the minorities continued for decades.

Although the campaign was allegedly launched against the communities that did not speak Turkish, it was implemented on the minorities of the Lausanne Treaty and especially on the Jewish community. There were many reasons behind the decision to primarily target the Jewish community; the reasons can be explained politically, economically and socially. Historically, the Christian minorities of the Empire had the support of Europe, some even being granted the citizenships of the European countries. Thereby, the Christian tradesmen in question were exempted from paying taxes, by virtue of the capitulations some European states enjoyed. Also, they were not required to do the compulsory military service. By virtue of the privileges mentioned and the great number of entrepreneurs from the Greek and Armenian communities in the Empire, they held much of the trade and the finance sector. However, after the dramatic decrease in the population of the two minorities by reason of the deportation and the population exchange, the Jewish community started to fill the gap, becoming the focus of interest. Furthermore, because of their religion and the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe, the Jews lacked the backing of Europe which

Armenians and Greeks enjoyed. For that matter, the campaign intensified in the Western cities that most of the Jewish tradesmen carried on their businesses.

Although the Jewish minority was regarded as the most loyal minority since they did not collaborate with the occupying powers after the World War, the language issue started to become problematic. Even though some Jews learned Turkish through the obligation of being able to speak Turkish to become an officer, most of them still were not able to speak the language. The opinion of the political elite was that among the non-Muslim minorities, the Jewish minority was the only one that could adopt Turkishness. Tekin Alp (Yıldız 2001: 268) expressed that the Republic solved the religious issue and the only thing that stood on the way to Turkification was learning the language. As for Rasih Kaplan (CHP 1935: 149), the Jews spoke the language of the ones who expelled them from their countries and now, it was time for them to speak the language of the ones admitted them. Likewise, Köprülüzade Fuat (Yıldız 2001: 260) called them the only minority that could be Turkified. As a matter of fact, just as the Chief Rabbi remarked, the Jewish community was also willing to speak Turkish but needed the patience and time to do so (Ibid). However, unlike the opinions of the republican elites that the Jewish minority could adopt Turkishness, the concern of the republican missionaries was not only the Jews not learning Turkish in centuries but also that they were not Muslims.

As for the state policies, the republican nationalism of 1920's resembled the civic nationalism in principle while shaping the Turkish nationalism. However, the principles of republican nationalism that were articulated many times by the elites: the unity in ideals, culture and language resulted in the ambiguity of an ideal Turk in people's minds. It was not clear what was meant by culture and how much cultural communality the people of Turkey, whose population was constituted by a remarkable proportion of emigrants, could share.

The language on the political field was exploited on a minimal level until the 1930's. As indicated, indifference of the state to determination of the official language is not possible and once chosen, the expectation of the state from the society to learn the language during the nation-building process cannot be claimed unreasonable. In addition, the termination of the campaign for the reason that language issue was politicized and the ethnic component started to exceed the authority of laws suggests that the republican elite strived not to build the nation- state based on ethnic terms

only. The secular and civic indoctrination of Kemalism however failed to structure the society. This led the Kemalists appeal to the ethnic components and myths during the 1930's.

According to the census of 1927, approximately 1.7 million Muslims spoke different languages than Turkish (such as Albanian, Arabic, Bosnian, Circassian and Kurdish) as mother tongue. Still, the focal point of the campaign had been the non-Muslims, especially Jewish, for the aforementioned reasons. This reveals that to become Turks, being able to speak Turkish was more important for the non-Muslims than it is for the Muslims in the eyes of the society and even though secularism was embraced by the state elites, religion still lingered strongly in people's minds. Regarding the conflict between the republican elite and their missionaries, "the official nationalist ideology and practice should be conceived as something contingent, evolving and shifting according to the new challenges, conditions, and debates of the day. They were in continuous construction by different institutions and individuals within the state as well within society" (Aslan 2007: 268), creating the need to reexamine the tendency to take a state- centric approach while analyzing the Turkish nation-building process.

During the 1930's, language was utilized more as an ethnic and political component than a cultural component by the state. Furthermore, Muslim minorities had become the objects of the language policies as much as the non-Muslims. The circular note called 'The Secret Notice about the Turkification of the People Subjected to Settlement' issued in 1930 ordered the dispersion of the population in the villages of minorities and the resettlement of these people in Turkish villages, with the aim of obliging them to use Turkish. Other orders were appointing officers who cannot speak the languages of the minorities to the places where minorities constituted the majority, encouraging the Turkish women to marry men that do not speak Turkish, changing the names of the villages with non-Turkish names and demonstrating that speaking Turkish is not only honorable but also profitable. As the conclusion, the circular stated: "To summarize, it is the national duty and an important mission for all the Turks to bind the minorities to the history and fortune of the Turks and turn their languages, traditions and wishes into Turkish¹⁰" (Bayrak 1993: 506-509). It quickly draws attention that language had become a significant political actor in the year 1930, taking part in each and every

10 Author's translation.

order of the circular aiming for the assimilation of the minorities. In the following year, Atatürk stated in his speech in Adana that:

"There is no difference between a Turk and the Turkish language. The language is one of the most apparent characteristics of the nation. For one to claim that he is a Turk, he should first and in any case speak Turkish. It would not be proper to believe someone who does not speak Turkish and claims his affiliation to the Turkish nation and culture... However there are more than 20.000 citizens in Adana who do not speak Turkish. If the Turkish Hearts tolerates this situation, this could go this way in the next centuries. In the catastrophic days, these people could go hand in and with people speaking other languages, turning against us. The primary duty of the Turkish Hearts is to turn those people into true Turks. Those people are Turkish citizens, and after all, our fortune and faith are common today and tomorrow¹¹" (Akalın 2004: 30)

This speech explicitly shows the delicate balance between two nationalisms practiced by republican nationalism and the distinct role of language. It could be observed that there is a distinction between the Turk and the Turkish citizen and the ones who do not speak Turkish were called citizens instead of Turkish despite the emphasis made on the common fortune and the fraternity of the people living in Turkey. For Mustafa Kemal, language as a political element was enough for the citizens living in Turkey to become betrayers if they were to be 'provoked' by people speaking other languages. Therefore, according to Mustafa Kemal, the minorities should have been turned into true Turks through language teaching. In this respect, it could even be stated that the terms nation and language were used as synonyms. For this reason, the Kurdish and Arabic people living in Turkey were not regarded as Turks while most of the emigrants which were 'chased away' from the Balkans and Caucasus by the nationally awakened societies and were ready to merge under the name of 'Turk' by adopting the language were considered as Turks. This reveals that language was a medium of incorporation as much as it was for rejection.

It should be expressed that just as the people constituting the state elite were not uniform, their actions and reactions towards the language issue were not monolithic either. Even though it was the authoritative one party rule who adopted the

11 Author's translation.

Resettlement Law that “will create a country speaking with one language, thinking in the same way and sharing the same sentiment” (Ülker 2008: 3) according to the Minister of Interior and required all subjects living in the country to adopt Turkish surnames in the course of the rise of fascism in Europe, it was the same leadership that repressed the extremist student uprising in 1933 against the French firm which penalized a Turkish worker for refusing to speak any other language than Turkish. Mustafa Kemal clearly expressed in his written statement that the ethnic based movements in the country should be limited to what has been determined by the government claiming that: “One of our main wishes is to raise a hardworking, sensitive and nationalist youth. The youth should be careful to abide by the laws of the Republic and the procedures and rules of the Republican forces. Trust the justice of the laws and the judicial powers and be assured that the Republican government knows its duties on national matters” (Aslan 2007: 265)

Yet in the second half of 1930’s, a transition to a period of ethnicism in which kinship rose to prominence started and language played a role in the shaping of the myths after the failure to assimilate the Kurdish people. Even though the 1924 Constitution stated that ‘all subjects are considered Turk regardless of their religion and race’, the Resettlement Law of 1934 made the distinction of the ‘Turks that are not citizens’ and the ‘citizens that are not Turks’. According to Yıldız (2001, 248), the Resettlement Law marks the point when the principles of republican nationalism, namely unity in ideals, culture and language, transformed into unity in blood, culture and language.

The Civil Institutions

As previously stated, despite the one-party rule, the Early Republican state was not monolithic. The republican ideology, with the objective of secularizing and modernizing the state, was appropriated by the educated classes. The professors, teachers, students, authors and educated people working in different fields spearheaded the movement. Even though they acted as the missionaries of the republican ideology, their level of commitment to the ideology differed from each other, as well as from the state elites. The termination of the Citizen Speak Turkish campaign is one substantial evidence of this divergence. As the continuation of the Turkish Society which was established in 1908, the Turkish Hearts led the way in the campaign along with various student unions and professional associations.

Established in 1912 with the aim of the progress of national culture, morality, intellectual life, maintenance of the social structure and the glorification of Turkishness, the Turkish Hearts was one of the three civil institutions¹² that was not abolished by the CUP government. As a leading body in Turkish nationalism and Westernization, the institution welcomed intellectuals like Ziya Gökalp and Ömer Seyfettin who came to Istanbul after the conquest of Thessaloniki by the Greeks. Also, the institution exhibited their western character by allowing women to become members and assembled meetings in which women and men attended together. In the early republican era, the institution enounced that they were not interested in the party politics and would collaborate with all Turkish nationalist groups. As discussed, Hamdullah Suphi, the head of the Hearts, defined the Turk in 1924 as the one who speaks Turkish, practices Islam and carries the love of Turkishness in his heart. Hence, they set up most of their offices in the Eastern Turkey with the intention of disseminating Turkish language and culture while the offices in the west, fewer in amount, engaged in the self-improvement of the youth. Besides raising issues like the dissemination of Turkish nationalism and the rights of women, they have organized several events like lectures, theatres or exhibitions. However, the Turkish Hearts was eventually shut down in 1931 suggesting to have served its purpose. According to Arıkan (1999: 265), Mustafa Kemal regarded the Turkish Hearts as an institution responsible with the cultural, not political, activities of the RPP and felt uncomfortable with the extremist Turkish attitude of the institution and in particular, Hamdullah Suphi. At the time of the closure, the institution had 267 branches and more than 30.000 members.

In the place of Turkish Hearts, People's House was founded with the instruction of the RPP in 1932. The head of the institution, Recep Peker, had set the target as rendering the society a mass of people that love and understand each other, abide by the ideals and are conscious, together with the RPP (Onbaşı 2011: 75). Compared to the Hearts, the People's House rather dealt with the folkloric issues and the dissemination of the Turkish culture. In parallel with the secularization of Turkey at the time, they allocated no place for the religious books in their libraries in an attempt to remove religion from the political definition of the Turk. In the words of Karpas (1974: 69), "the political goal

¹² The other two institutions were: Müdafaa-i Milliye Cemiyeti and Donanma Cemiyeti

of the Houses was to persuade as many people as possible in the countryside that Turkish nationalism was their new religion and Republicanism their modern political identity". The House mostly mentioned the unity in ideals and tried to shape the culture of the new Turk through the articles and stories in their publications. Among those publications, the name of the Eminönü People's House, 'The New Turk', is worthy of note (Şakiroğlu 1995: 12). Having organized hundreds of lectures, concerts and film screenings, the institution was shut down in 1951 by the Democrat Party due to acting as a subsidiary of the RPP.

8. Conclusion

Religion, not the nations, had an important place in the Ottoman political sphere, dividing the people into Millets. Keeping loyalty to the dynasty in the forefront, the citizenship rested upon a civic basis until the rise of Turkism under the CUP rule. Even though a wave of nationalism started to spread among the intellectuals by virtue of Tanzimat, the Turkish nationalism in Ottoman Empire did not exactly resemble the Eastern European nationalisms in the sense that a tradition of a multinational Empire in which the Ottomanists strained to keep the nations together prevailed. Later on, although the Turkist mentality predominated over Islamism and Ottomanism through the late Ottoman period, the Ottomanists still acted as the prominent figures in political and social spheres. In the same vein, the members of CUP were raised in a multinational structure and the Committee itself was established in Thessaloniki, the second largest city of Ottoman Empire where numerous religious and national groups lived together. Likewise, the members of the organization were not only Turkish but also Albanian, Bosnian, Tatar and even non-Muslim. According to Hanioglu (qtd in. Bayar 2014: 26), out of the seven founders of CUP none was ethnically Turkish, four of them being emigrants from Caucasus, one from Balkans and two from the Kurdistan region. Being the successor of such an Empire and containing a huge population of emigrants and 'legal minorities' -despite the population exchange with Greece and deportation of Armenians-, the early Republican period presented civic overtones.

Different components were utilized in the course of building the Turkish identity during the Republican period. In early 1920's, religion played a critical role. In this period, it was frequently mentioned that all Muslim groups, especially the Turks and Kurds were the possessors of the homeland. However, after the victory in the Independence War and the decrease of the non-Muslim population, the Republican elite found the free

space and the chance to put their homogenization plan into action. As distinct from the old order, the Republican elite appealed to language in order to create the ideal Turk; the utilization of language in this kind of a context, rendered it a politicized component in building the Turkish nation. On the other side, the religious element was pushed away since the republican elite held the millet system responsible of the collapse of the Empire, the ulema still dominated the religious sphere and the Sultan held the Caliphate title until 1924. Thereby, a period of secularization that is notable for the westernizing reforms started and a civic-based citizenship was kept in effect during the 1920's. The expectation of the state from the citizens was to embrace the common language, ideals and culture to become a true Turk. For the dissemination of this type of nationalism, education was considered important and civil institutions like the Turkish Hearts were collaborated. However, this new envision of nationalism failed to grow into a high culture. The inheritance of the old system rose to the surface as religion manifested itself as a remarkable political actor and a pillar of Turkishness still fresh in minds, marginalizing the non-Muslim minorities. The Citizen Speak Turkish Campaign, which started as an act to stimulate all minorities to speak Turkish but turned into an act against the non-Muslim minorities by transforming the policy of assimilation into dissimilation, crossed the borders determined by the state. Furthermore, the strategy in the 1920's fell short of assimilating the Kurds in a short span of time. This resulted from the failure of the newly established and unfounded state institutions and education system to penetrate into the densely populated Kurdish region and the unwillingness of the Kurds to adopt Turkishness whereas the immigrant groups who were in Mustafa Kemal's words 'chased away from Balkans and Caucasus with a stick' did not see harm in embracing their new nation.

In consequence of the failure to disseminate their idea of nationalism in 1920's, the Republican elite, which did not fancy utilizing language for ethnic means earlier on, started to draw advantage from the vernacular language. Regarding the facts that secularizing, rather than ethnic, measures were taken by that time and that the National Assembly had cut the budget of the Language Council showing the word fabrication as a reason in 1928, the beginning of 1930's and the language reform mark the start of a period in which the high culture was laid aside in the interest of reaching the masses and incorporating them into the process. In this period, the Arabic and Persian words were substituted with the Turkish neologisms that were gathered from different corners of the country, picked up from various Turkic languages and the pre-

Islamic Turkish and reproduced or modified through the instrument of Turkic or Western languages. Later on, in line with the ethno-symbolist interpretation of Smith, these policies were followed by the language congresses, myths and theories that put forward a Turkish figure which created the civilization, possessed Anatolia for the last 7.000 years and spread the proto-language, Turkish, to the whole world. Besides acting as a tool to render Turkishness appealing, language also served the purpose of demarcating the limits of Turkish identity. The language was used as the main indicator for inclusion to the society, despite occasionally sharing its status with the ethnic elements in 1930's. In addition, it should also be noted that the westernizing reforms continued throughout the 1920's and 1930's without a pause and the Turkish figure, which all the groups were encouraged to melt into, was the 'secular Western Turk'. This argument is underpinned by the replacement of the Ottoman script, which was identified with Islam, with the western Latin alphabet and the emphasis on the pre-Islamic Turkish history through the language and history theses, myths and the education system.

As a conclusion, the Turkish language had been an important tool in the shaping of Turkish identity and the dissemination of nationalism as from the beginning of modernization of Ottoman Empire. Being the outcome of the nationalist ideas of the political elite and a subject to both corpus and status planning in the republican era, language had been the most substantial and efficient component in defining the secular Turkish identity and disseminating nationalism in the 1920's; language further continued its role through the 1930's with a sharper ethnic tone, as the ethnic facet of nationalism gained ground, if not completely dominated the period.

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